TASK FORCE
AND
PUBLIC DIALOGUE
ON THE
ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

SCHOOL PLUS
A Vision for Children and Youth

Toward a New School, Community and Human Service Partnership in Saskatchewan

Final Report
to the Minister of Education
Government of Saskatchewan

Prepared by
Dr. M. Tymchak, Chair
and the Saskatchewan Instructional Development & Research Unit (SIDRU)

February 28, 2001

It takes the whole village to raise a child.

[African proverb]

*...the contribution of one domain alone cannot assure good mental health of children...remedial efforts to help children in difficulty emotionally and behaviorally must involve the child, the family and the community.**

*...data...indicates that children who are strongly connected to schools do better than those who are not. A challenge for schools and communities is to find strategies that reduce the number of children and youth who are marginalized in these settings and who do not participate fully in available activities.**

*...children today face many challenges to their emotional and mental well-being. Targeted clinical programs have long since been overwhelmed, making essential the introduction of carefully evaluated school-based, universally available prevention programs.***

*...the number of children with clinically important emotional and behavioral problems is so large that clinical services alone can never deal adequately with the problem. A combination of universal targeted and clinical interventions are needed, all carried out against the background of a civic community.**

*[Dr. D. R. Offerd, *The Health of Canada's Children*, Canadian Institute of Child Health, Third Edition, 2000, p. 225]

**[Graham Chance, Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee, Canadian Institute of Child Health, *The Health of Canada's Children*, p. XII]

So many people have been so exceedingly helpful to the Task Force since its inception in May 1999. In the *Interim Report* we acknowledged the help provided to us during the consultation phase of our work from August 1999 to June 2000, but we want to repeat this thanks again. We also want to express our gratitude to everyone who has helped us during the second phase of our work as we have been gathering feedback to the *Interim Report* during Fall 2000.

Appendix 5 provides a list of the meetings we have held and Appendix 6 lists the submissions we have received from organizations and individuals. We want to thank all of the individuals and organizations who provided submissions, and also, those who participated in meetings. The contribution made to our work by all of the stakeholders, human service and community-based agencies, expert resource people, school divisions, and other organizations with whom we have met, or from whom we have received submissions, has been enormous.

Our task was to address the role of the school in society today and to conduct a public dialogue on this subject. We did not begin with a preconceived set of ideas for which we merely sought support; we began by listening. We have reflected on what we have heard, we have attempted to find solutions and create a vision – but everything we have said in the *Interim Report*, and in this final report, is based upon what we heard from the people of the province.

The members of the Task force also want to acknowledge the excellent support afforded to us by the Director and the staff of the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit (SIDRU) at the Faculty of Education, University of Regina, including Dr. David Friesen, Director; Sandra Allan, Associate Director, and Executive Coordinator of the Role of the School; Michelle Pawliuk, Project Assistant; and Juanita Ingham, Research Secretary. The work of all of these people, and the support they have given us, has been superb. We cannot even begin to imagine how we would have fared in this enormous task without their counsel and assistance.

For the cover design of the *Interim Report*, and this document, we are indebted to the artistic genius of Dr. Norman Yakel, Professor, Arts Education Program, Faculty of Education, University of Regina.

For all of this help and cooperation, and for the demonstrations of commitment to the children and youth of our province, once again, we want to express our heartfelt thanks!

Members of the Task Force

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND, ISSUES AND CONTEXT 3

Background to the Study 4
Why Role of the School Now? 5
The Tectonic Factors 7
Special needs 7
Demographic shift 8
The information society and globalization 9
Poverty 11
75/25…60/40 12
Pupil mobility 12
Family changes 13
Cross-cultural issues 14
Human services integration 15
Rural depopulation 16
Curriculum reform 17
Career concerns 17
Violence 18
Student attitudes and behavior 19
Meaning and Challenge 21
Teachers' experience 21
The new society 24
Turning points 25
The Role of the School 28
Historical reflection 28
Function, purpose and power 31
So what about the role of the school? 34
Beliefs and values, sources and commitments 37
Context and Opportunity 39

SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS 43

A. Structure, Roles and Partnerships 46
1. Community Schools 46
2. Interagency 50
3. The School^{PLUS} Environment 59
4. The Role of the Teacher 71
5. The Role of In-School Administrators 75
6. Pre-Service Colleges of Education 76
7. Partnership with Students 77

8. Partnership with Parents 78

B. Programs 79
9. Pre-Kindergarten 80
10. Hidden Youth 82
11. Court Orders and School Attendance 85
12. Public Education for Troubled Youth 86
13. Information Technology 87
14. Distance Education 89
15. Career Education 91
16. Extracurricular Activities 94
17. High Schools 97
18. School Fees 100
19. Aboriginal Education 101
20. Student Attitudes and Behavior 103
21. School-Community Cooperatives 107

C. Support 109
22. Physical Plant 109
23. Funding 111

D. Implementation 111
24. Implementation 111

CONCLUSION 113

SUMMARY: RECOMMENDATIONS 114

A. Structure, Roles and Partnerships 114
1. Community Schools 114
2. Interagency 115
3. The School^{PLUS} Environment 116
4. The Role of the Teacher 117
5. The Role of In-School Administrators 118
6. Pre-Service Colleges of Education 118
7. Partnership with Students 119
8. Partnership with Parents 119

B. Programs 120
9. Pre-Kindergarten 120
10. Hidden Youth 120
11. Court Orders and School Attendance 121
12. Public Education for Troubled Youth 121
13. Information Technology 122
14. Distance Education 122
15. Career Education 122

16. Extracurricular Activities 123
17. High Schools 124
18. School Fees 124
19. Aboriginal Education 125
20. Student Attitudes and Behavior 126
21. School-Community Cooperatives 127

C. Support 127
22. Physical Plant 127
23. Funding 128

D. Implementation 128
24. Implementation 128

REFERENCES 129

APPENDICES 133

APPENDIX 1: Budget Estimates 134
APPENDIX 2: School^{PLUS} and the Teacher 138
APPENDIX 3: School^{PLUS} and the In-School Administrator 140
APPENDIX 4: What is a Community School? 142
APPENDIX 5: List of Meetings 144
APPENDIX 6: List of Submissions 154
APPENDIX 7: Terms of Reference 159
APPENDIX 8: Glossary 161

Task Force Members

John O. Anderson
John Anderson, B.A., U of S, and M.S.W., UBC, lives in Yorkton, where he is the South East Regional Director of Social Services. He has chaired the Regional Intersectoral Committee since its inception. John has worked in numerous positions in Saskatchewan in adult probation and child welfare, and has been Director of an adult correctional facility, and a treatment centre for adolescents, and Director of Social Services Youth Services Division. He is married to Mary, and has three daughters.

Tina L. Anderson
Tina Anderson is a Métis person, co-manager of a family business in her hometown, the northern Métis community of Green Lake. She is Chair of the Northern Lights S.D. #113 Board of Education, and a member of the Boards of the Keewatin Yathé Health District, Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), and Northwest Regional Victim Services. She has a B.A. in Psychology, and is working on a Bachelor's degree in Social Work. She enjoys many Northern outdoor activities.

Ava Bear
Ava Bear is a resident of the Muskoday First Nation, where she has been on the Band Council for 10 years. She also spent two years as the Tribal Vice-Chief for the Saskatoon Tribal Council. Ava has served as a trustee with the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division in Prince Albert and as a member of the Kinistino School Division Board. Ava is married to Dale; together they have two children and two grandchildren.

Carol Hayward
Carol Hayward is the Chair of the Pasquia Health District Board. She also volunteers in several other organizations in her community, and considers it a privilege to have the time and opportunity to do so. Carol helps her husband, Calvin, in the operation of their grain farm. She is mother to two adult children and grandmother to two grandchildren. She enjoys singing, especially in her church choir, as well as taking part in another of her favorite pastimes, old-time dancing.

Barbara Keirnes-Young
Barbara Keirnes-Young, B.A, M.Ed., M.S., D.Ed., is currently President of LEADS (League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents) and Superintendent of Curriculum and Support Services for Regina Public Schools. Barbara was Director of Policy, Planning & Research for Saskatchewan Education during "Directions" and Core Curriculum policy development. She and Errol are parents to eight children and 12 grandchildren.

Murray J. Langgard
Murray Langgard is a retired Chief of Police of the Regina Police Service, Past President of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police, and past Board member of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. Murray has just completed his appointment as Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Anniversaries Secretariat. He served several years as President of the Sherwood Cooperative Association, and is a 25-year member of the Regina 35 Lions Club. He is married with two grown daughters.

Task Force Members (cont.)

Michael (Mike) LeClaire

Mike LeClaire, B.Ed, PG.D, M.Ed., has been an educator for 26 years. He has served children and youth in the capacities of teacher, counselor, and vice and assistant principal. He is currently on leave from his Principalship of Nutana Collegiate Institute in Saskatoon while he works with Saskatchewan Education on integrated services. Mike is married to Shirley, a social worker, and has three children, two in university and one in high school. He likes spending time with family at Delaronde Lake, and enjoys golfing, fishing, hunting, skiing, camping and canoeing.

Kate O'Brodovich

Kate O'Brodovich, B.V/T Ed., M. Ed., works part-time as a career counselor for SIAST and as a distance tutor for Athabasca University. She has served on a local school council and is currently Vice President of the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils. Kate's interests include woodworking and a new grandchild. She lives with her husband and daughter near Shellbrook; her son and daughter-in-law attend university in Saskatoon.

Ashley Topuschak

Ashley Topuschak, B.A., is a native of Moose Jaw. During her university studies, she enjoyed volunteering with community-based agencies, and made the decision to continue working in this area after graduation. Her experiences led to her current position as Youth Coordinator for the Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board , a non-profit organization working with partnerships in training and labour force development. Ashley enjoys snowboarding, fishing and spending time with nieces, nephews and family.

Michael Tymchak, Chair

Michael Tymchak, B.A. (High Honors, History), Ph.D. (Philosophy), a native of Edam, served as Dean of Education at the University of Regina from 1992 to 2000 (June). Before that he was Director of the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP) in La Ronge. He has been involved in a number of significant educational endeavors in the province, including several major projects for the STF and the SSTA. Michael is married to Beryl; they live in Regina.

Debbie Ward

Debbie Ward, B.Ed. U of R, is a former Regina Catholic school system trustee (1988-2000) and a past-president of the SSTA. She has served on the SSTA executive since 1991, and was presented with a lifetime SSTA membership in November 2000. Debbie has sat on several provincial committees, including the High School Review, the Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Committee, and the Equity in Education Task Force. She is married to Dave, and has three children.

Doug Willard

Doug Willard, B.Sc., is past-president of the STF, and has been a member of the CTF Board of Directors since 1998. He is currently president-designate of that organization, and will become president in 2001. Doug now teaches high school in Blaine Lake for the Saskatchewan Valley School Division. He has 28 years of teaching service and education involvement in Saskatchewan. He is married to Nadia, and has three children.

INTRODUCTION

The work of the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School has taken place in two phases. Phase 1 began in May 1999 with the creation of the 12-person Task Force by the Minister of Education, and culminated in September 2000 with the publication of the *Interim Report*. During this phase the Task Force conducted an extensive consultation and information gathering process. The results of this process can be found in Section 2, "What the Task Force Heard: Analysis and Themes," of the *Interim Report*. Based upon its reflections and deliberations on this information, the Task Force prepared a preliminary statement of its response which formed Section 3, "The Task Force Response: Vision and Recommendations." In keeping with the community development model, the *Interim Report* was widely circulated. This opportunity for scrutiny of the *Report*, and the invitation to provide the Task Force with further feedback, became Phase 2 of the Task Force's work.

Phase 2 took place between September and December 2000. In addition to circulating the *Interim Report*, the Task Force solicited feedback through a variety of means. We held a broad-based Symposium of educational stakeholders, including representatives from the various educational organizations such as the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents (LEADS), and Saskatchewan Education, as well as parents, teachers, students, in-school administrators, and governmental, community and Aboriginal organizations. We ran an ad in major newspaper dailies as well as many weeklies, offering a copy of the *Interim Report* to anyone who requested it, and inviting feedback; we had a high school Social Studies Unit Plan on the Role of the School written and circulated, and invited feedback from students based upon their study of this Unit. We made appearances in media, especially radio, and we made many invited presentations to a variety of interested groups. Finally, we kept our website operational for anyone who wanted to make comments or submissions in that manner.

Although we originally thought that after this second phase of consultation we would simply revise the *Interim Report* in light of the feedback we received (treating it like a *draft* version), as the process unfolded it became clear that this was not the right way to proceed. For example, much of what was reported in the *Interim Report* remained unaltered by the second phase of consultation, especially Section 2. Similarly, the Task Force's information gathering activities contained in Section 1 of the *Interim Report* is not in need of revision. While these things did not need revision, it became apparent that the addition of another kind of reflection, one not attempted in the *Interim Report*, would be beneficial. What seemed to be needed in addition to the *Interim Report* was a reflection on why the issue of the role of the school has emerged now. Then, based on this reflection and the feedback we received in Phase II, we needed to revise our recommendations.

This Final Report of the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School is, therefore, a distinct document and not simply a touch-up of the *Interim Report*.

Section 1, entitled "Background, Issues and Context," is an attempt to step back and, from an historical and sociological perspective, reflect upon the perceptions we gathered from the consultations in Phase 1. We hope this reflection will throw further light upon the social and economic forces that form the context of our exploration into the role of the school. We also saw value in examining other turning points in the history of schooling and studying their contextual dynamics. Then, since so much of what we are thinking about in this study hangs on the notion of 'role', we felt the need to examine that notion philosophically in an attempt to understand its logic, as well as its relationship to cognate ideas like function, purpose and power. We especially needed to address the concern raised by a few people that we had not examined 'the purpose of schooling' in our *Interim Report*.

Finally, as a last step before getting on to a new and revised version of recommendations, we needed to make explicit some of the values and beliefs that we as a Task Force brought to our work. Undoubtedly, as members of a Task Force we brought many beliefs and values to our work, but this work has been for us fundamentally a journey of consultation and discovery. We did not begin with a predetermined set of solutions in mind. We began by listening. What you read in this final report is a product of our deliberations upon what we heard, the needs and issues identified by a wide spectrum of people in the province who are concerned about the education of our children and youth.

The preliminary recommendations we ventured in the *Interim Report* were the first stopping place in our journey. These recommendations have benefited from the discussion, scrutiny and critique that occurred in Phase 2. We hope that the recommendations contained in Section 2 of this report show the benefit of this refining process. Of course, there is more in Section 2 than a reworking of the earlier recommendations. Part of the chastening process has resulted in some of the material that was contained in the *Interim Report* recommendations being examined as contextual issues, rather than being recommendations per se. In addition, there are recommendation topics in this Report that were not raised in the *Interim Report* at all.

For the most part, however, the feedback we received in Phase 2 strongly affirmed the basic direction we took in the *Interim Report*. During the Symposium most of the recommendations received a positive "Agree-Strongly Agree" rating. We did discover that the concept of 'community schools', which we drew upon quite heavily in the *Interim Report*, is not as well understood nor as well appreciated as we thought it was, nor as we think it should be. (See description, APPENDIX 4, p. 142.) We received strong affirmation for including a section on student attitudes and behavior, but we also noted a lack of consensus on the sort of program that would best satisfy this area of school curriculum. An increasing lack of social homogeneity is, of course, one of the contextual characteristics for the role of schools today.

Thus, the recommendations contained in this Report have not been fundamentally altered from the direction we took in the *Interim Report*. We trust, however, that you will find them developed more fully and more convincingly.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND, ISSUES AND CONTEXT

It must be acknowledged that 'the role of the school' is not at first blush an obvious choice for the topic of a major educational study or review. The fact that the Government of Saskatchewan was strongly lobbied to initiate such a study raises the suspicion that something extraordinary, and perhaps quite fundamental, must be at stake. Where did the lobby come from?

The Saskatchewan Council on Children is a body of more than twenty key individuals who are well informed about issues relating to children and schooling. In its *Second Report*, dated October 1998, the Council makes the recommendation that:

> *The Government of Saskatchewan undertake a public discussion involving all stakeholders (parents, children, educators, aboriginal communities, human service providers, community organizations, and businesses) to* determine the role public education could play *as a locus for holistically meeting the needs of children.* (p. 18, emphasis added)

At about the same time as the Council was considering its report, a meeting of representatives from a number of key educational organizations in the province with responsibility for K–12 education was held with the then Minister of Education, the Hon. Clay Serby. Present at the meeting were representatives from the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents (LEADS), and Saskatchewan Education. The issue of the role of the school in society surfaced in their discussion, and consensus was reached that the Minister should appoint a Task Force to address the subject. The notion grew that the Task Force should engage in both a consultation and a dialogue with the stakeholders in education and the public at large. Concern was especially voiced that the Task Force attempt to identify whether or not there was a gap between public expectations for the school and the role that the school can realistically play, given its current resource base.

Although this lobby effort relating to the role of schools is quite recent, the history of concern about the role of schools in the province goes back some time. In 1992, for example, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA) convened a major Symposium on the topic of the "Role of Schools," held in Saskatoon. The purpose was:

> *To provide a forum for examining the expanding role of the school and to develop a forward looking and commonly supported understanding for the future role of the school.* (The Role of Schools, SSTA, 1992, p. 1)

Approximately 100 persons representing some 20 different organizations participated in the Symposium. It is obvious from the statement of purpose and from other parts of the *Report* that the context of these discussions was the pressure on schools to expand their role. In his remarks to the Symposium, for example, Craig Melvin, the Executive Director of the SSTA and the Symposium Chairperson, noted that:

> *Articulating the "Role of Schools" is a primary goal of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. We are committed to:*
>
> - *Providing leadership in focusing public attention on the expanding role of school,*
> - *Securing support and increased resources for school boards attempting to meet the needs of children,*
> - *Establishing mechanisms to ensure effective coordination of programs, services, and resources for Saskatchewan youth.*
>
> (The Role of Schools, SSTA, 1992, p. 7)

Nearly 10 years later it is quite amazing to note how accurately the Symposium gauged the issues around the role of the school, as well as identifying potential remedies. It is equally remarkable to note that during the intervening years progress on these matters has been made only very slowly, inch by inch rather than mile after mile. It is difficult not to draw the conclusion that what is lacking is not ideas and solutions, but the will to act upon them. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

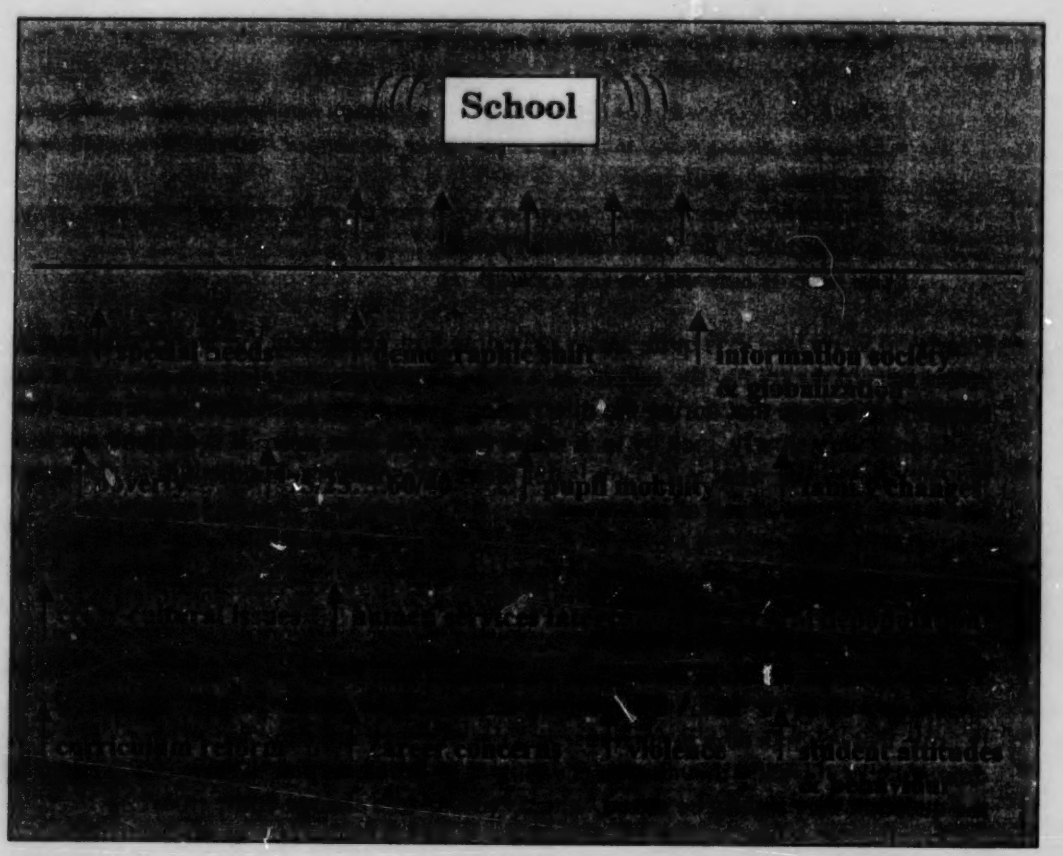
The lobby effort to create the Role of the School Task Force and Public Dialogue noted above, as well as the SSTA Symposium, arises in the context of a growing awareness that the role that schools play in society – and the role they are expected to play – has altered dramatically. Usually this change is captured in the claim that the role *has expanded*. But the question may rightly be asked, where has this role change come from?

Perhaps a metaphor will help us understand what appears to be happening. The one that comes to mind relates to a phenomenon that has now become familiar to us, not only to students of geology, but in popular consciousness too. It relates to the surface of the earth, earthquakes, and the movement of tectonic plates. The role played by the school in society may be compared in some ways to the earth's surface: we live with it every day and we take it for granted – until it is disturbed!

Like the earth's surface, we tend to focus attention on the role that school plays in society only during those times when something unusual is happening. Moreover, when the disturbance is quite severe, such as after an earthquake, we are driven by curiosity and survival instinct to try and discover why the disturbance is occurring here and now. **After listening carefully to the perceptions, beliefs and feelings of people across the province as they spoke to us about schools, children and youth, the members of the Task Force on the Role of the School have gained the unmistakable impression that the ground on**

which 'school' stands has been shaken. The picture that occurs to us is illustrated in Figure 1:

Figure 1: *"7.5 on the Richter Scale"*



After considerable reflection on what we have heard from our extensive consultation process, undertaken during Phase 1 of our work and reported in our *Interim Report*, the members of the Task Force have come to believe that over the past two decades schools in Saskatchewan have been subject to powerful change forces at a very fundamental level. Indeed, as the earthquake metaphor suggests, these forces could be compared with the movement of tectonic plates: the disequilibrium being experienced on the surface is the product of forces created by the movement and collisions of these plates at subterranean levels.

It will be useful here to discuss each of these tectonic factors briefly, although some of them will need to be addressed in more detail later in the report. For now our purpose is simply to identify each of the factors, or plates as we represent them in Figure 1, and especially to note the way in which they impact on school equilibrium.

Although opinions on the matter will probably differ, some of the factors listed appear to be more important, and more fundamental, than others. *No attempt is made in what follows here to rank the factors, and especially, their order does not reflect any assessment of their significance.* All are important, but what is especially significant is that, taken together, they represent quite enormous changes and challenges for schools.

Following the earthquake metaphor, we will call each plate a 'tectonic factor' in order to emphasize the fundamental impact that it tends to have on the role of the school in contemporary society, similar to the movement of tectonic plates in relation to earthquakes. Each of the factors identified below tends to have an impact not only in and of itself, but also as it collides with the expectations and practices of what has gone on before, the status quo. Although the plates are numerous, it is vital that each be considered because only then can we assess their full impact, taken singly and together, on the role of the school.

3.1 ***Special needs.*** Since the early 1980s many special needs of children, which had previously been addressed in institutional settings removed from the school, have been integrated into regular school settings. The philosophy of inclusion has been implemented in Saskatchewan schools, as well as throughout the country, as one of the most significant and fundamental educational initiatives in modern times. In addition to those needs which were previously met in a segregated manner, actually a small proportion of the special needs represented in schools, there has been an enormous growth both in the types of need schools are attempting to meet, as well as in the number of children who need specialized care, attention and programs.

Undoubtedly it represents a triumph of humanitarian spirit and enlightened educational practice. As with any major educational reform, however, details of program, practice and resources take time to be worked out. In 1998 the Government of Saskatchewan appointed a Review Committee, chaired by Christine Boyczuk, to examine Special Education in the province. The Committee's very fine report, *Directions for Diversity* (January 2000), and Saskatchewan Education's reply, *Strengthening Supports* (October 2000), signal most important contributions to this vital area of educational programming.

From the perspective of the role of schools, however, we need to note that this strategic initiative represents a very considerable expansion of the role that schools, and especially teachers, play in relation to meeting the needs of children. As this tectonic plate met that of the traditional function of schools, something akin to shock waves were bound to occur. The scope and complexity of the issues that have arisen would be difficult to overestimate. The result is a phenomenon that could be called the 'intensification' of the role of the teacher. Certainly teachers see mainstreaming –

without adequate support – as a contributing factor to the reduction of their emotional resources.[1]

3.2 ***Demographic shift.*** The second major tectonic factor relates to the significant change that is taking place in the province with respect to the growth in school-aged children of Aboriginal ancestry.[2] In the late 1970s it became commonplace to hear that, according to population projections, by the year 2020 children of Aboriginal ancestry would constitute 40% of school enrolments. According to recent estimates, the Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan is 13%, and is projected to become 32.5% by the year 2045.[3] According to this source, Aboriginal children already constitute 33% of children aged 5-17 (school-aged) in the province, and by the year 2016 they will represent 46.4% of this population.

Whereas half of the general population is under the age of 36, half of the Aboriginal population is under the age of 18! The growth in the proportion of school-aged children of Aboriginal ancestry in the province is a fact of enormous educational significance.

Obviously the Aboriginal population is not evenly distributed throughout the province, and thus is not equally represented within all school divisions. It is well known, for example, that roughly 75% of the population in northern areas is Aboriginal, and that in many northern schools Aboriginal children make up 90-98% of the enrolment.[4] It would be a mistake to think that the larger proportions of Aboriginal children are found in rural or remote villages and settlements, however, because some urban public school divisions have reported to the Task Force that children of Aboriginal ancestry already make up 40% of their enrolment. This is because the rate of movement of First Nations persons off-reserve is increasing steadily, with 42% living off-reserve in 1997 compared with 34.3% in 1990.[5]

---

[1] See, *Interim Report*: "Too many students in classes, mainstreaming of special needs children without adequate support, unremitting criticism and unrealistic expectations from the community, all of these factors (and others, too) have reduced the emotional resources of teachers" (p. 42).

[2] For the purposes of this Report the term 'Aboriginal' will be used to designate persons of both First Nations and Métis ancestry. This practice reflects a fairly well-accepted convention in current usage for these terms in the province.

[3] The figures quoted here are taken from a *Saskatchewan Education Briefing Note*, as of May 15, 1998. The statistics in the *Briefing Note* are in turn derived from Statistics Canada 1991 Census; the Aboriginal People's Survey, 1991; and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1991 Indian Register. Although the statistics quoted here are helpful indicators, they should not (here or anywhere) be taken as absolutely precise. The Métis and Non-Status component of the Aboriginal population is particularly problematic from any counting or census exercise, because they represent 'self-identifying' categories, and individuals are free not to identify if they so choose.

[4] The term 'northern' in this document is used roughly to designate the area that formerly comprised the Northern Administrative District (NAD), administered by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan until 1982.

[5] According to Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada currently (2000) 48% of the First Nations population is off-reserve, the majority in cities. And while Aboriginal peoples make up 12% of the general population, in some cities, for example, Prince Albert, they constitute 26% of the population. (Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2000, does not include Métis).

This demographic shift represents at once a challenge for change, and an unparalleled opportunity. There are obviously curricular implications for a demographic shift of this magnitude, as well as for many other aspects of school programming. Certainly there can be no question about the fact that it constitutes a factor of tectonic significance for Saskatchewan education.

3.3 ***The information society and globalization.*** It has become commonplace to recognize that Western society, and indeed the whole world, is undergoing a paradigm shift not unlike the revolution that occurred in the late 18th and 19th centuries, when agrarian society gave way to the Industrial Age.[6] In our own case, industrial economies and technologies are being replaced or at least supplemented by modern technologies and communication. These innovations include the silicon chip, fibre optics and satellites, and the machines derived from them, such as computers, robotics and the like. It is the dawning of an age when knowledge itself has become a prime economic engine, and where information transfer of all kinds constitutes a significant industry.

The information technologies, coupled with burgeoning advances in knowledge itself, especially those associated with scientific discovery and technology transfer, have resulted in an information explosion. The startling growth of the Internet both hastens, and at the same time symbolizes, this explosion. Some social commentators have gone so far as to contend that we are now living in a knowledge economy, where an increasing number of jobs are related to the knowledge industry. Although such claims may be premature, there can be little doubt that information processing is quickly becoming a required skill in many walks of life.[7]

The communication technologies, combined with modern modes of transportation, have also contributed to a phenomenon known to us as 'globalization'. Globalization derives in part from the notion of the 'global village' that these technologies have created. Even more importantly, however, it relates to the dominance of transnational corporations which constitute the village's prevailing economic environment. Symbolized and hastened by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, this environment has increasingly molded public policy in the image of a corporate economic imperative.

Social experience and public policy in this era have, therefore, not surprisingly been heavily influenced by a market-driven, commercial model. Downsizing, right-sizing,

---

[6] This awareness is not, of course, new. *Towards 2000*, the Minister's Advisory Committee Curriculum and Instruction Review, in December 1985, noted: "'Information Age' has become a catch phrase used to describe a new age dominated by an abundance of information and communications technology" (p. 7). This awareness derived from the work of futurists like John Naisbitt, *Megatrends*, and Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (*Towards 2000*, pp. 8-9).

[7] A leading Canadian educational sociologist, David Livingston, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, for example, has contested the claim that there has been significant growth in the number of knowledge-based jobs in Canada. Livingston makes a strong case for the view that if anything Canadians are significantly over-educated and underemployed, see especially, *The Education-Jobs Gap: Underemployment or Economic Democracy*, Garamond Press, 1999.

doing more with less, and the discourse of accountability, that is, the cost-analysis of measured inputs and outputs, have become typical of the age.

The impact of both the information society and globalization on schools, directly and indirectly, has been extraordinary. With the advent of the Information Age, not only has the quantum of knowledge expanded to a remarkable degree, with profound implications for what can and should be taught, but the technologies for generating and retrieving information constitute a complex and expensive addition to school programs. Usually referred to simply as 'technology', the computer and its related systems represent a major change, and thus a challenge for schools and school divisions. And the costs are not negligible. The Task Force was quite taken aback by the magnitude of the expenditures being committed by school divisions. A not atypical smaller urban school division, with slightly less than 3000 pupils enrolled, told us that it spent $750,000 on technology in one year. References to this figure in consultations with other school divisions in other parts of the province confirmed that it was well within the normal range.

The cost is not simply for the purchase of hardware, but the expenses relating to system installation and maintenance, as well as the software program expertise required to ensure that educational staff has appropriate professional development opportunities, lest the machines become expensive dust collectors.

The impact of globalization is perhaps less immediately evident in Saskatchewan than some other jurisdictions, but it is nonetheless real. Rural depopulation surely relates to global economic forces, and the educational environment around us – privatized options, charter schools, vouchers, and partnerships with business and industry – reflect the dominance of market thinking and discourse. Strategies that tend to reduce public input and increase dependence on the corporate sector, as well as emphasis on measurement, outcomes, cost-effectiveness comparisons with other jurisdictions and so on, are all typical of the world of globalization.

The centrifugal and centripetal social forces typical of globalization are also evident in the province. On the one hand communication is almost instant, and knowledge of all kinds is pervasive, tending to pull people together (the centripetal force); on the other hand, an opposite and almost equal force is tending to pull societies apart, sometimes called the new tribalism (the centrifugal force). As a by-product of these phenomena, 'community' has come to be defined as much by common interests, values and beliefs – at whatever distance – as it is by geographical proximity. So while the awareness of diversity has been enhanced in the global world, so has the influence of distinctive identity factors such as culture, language, and race.

Thus, the information society and globalization have a wide range of implications for schools, from day-to-day issues such as the expectation to teach technological literacy, to the social policy criteria used to determine education funding, to the performance assessment of children and school systems, and to rural school enrolments (through the impact of global factors on the family farm). Together they

have created a new world for schooling, and unquestionably represent what we are calling tectonic factors.

3.4 ***Poverty.*** Poverty amongst school-aged children is not a new phenomenon in the province, nor is it new elsewhere in Canada. What we have that is new, however, is the presence of significant poverty in the midst of extensive affluence, the painful juxtaposition of need and plenty. Given the relative affluence of the age, the extent of the child poverty will come as a surprise to many.

Winnipeg, Montreal and Saskatoon have the highest rates of poverty for children under the age of five. In these cities, one quarter of preschool-aged children are poor. Saskatchewan's incidence of poverty for children under the age of 18, in 1996, was 22%; only Manitoba (27%) and Nova Scotia (23%) were higher.[8] The national average for poverty amongst children 7 years of age and younger is 25%, up from 13% in 1981; Saskatchewan's rate is 29%, only Manitoba's is higher, at 30%.[9] On the other hand Saskatchewan's poverty rate for children aged 7-17 is somewhat lower, at 18%; Nova Scotia (21%) and Quebec (20%) are higher, as are Alberta and British Columbia, both at 19%.[10] Saskatchewan has the second highest incidence of children amongst food bank recipients (483 per 1000), compared with Manitoba (402), and the Northwest Territories (543).

Although this level of poverty is disturbing enough in itself, the factors associated with poverty make it truly scary. David P. Ross makes the following claim in a recent edition of *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile:*

> ***Research is continually showing that poverty has serious negative consequences for child development . . . . Nearly 40% of very low-income children demonstrate high levels of indirect aggression (such as starting fights with peers or family members), compared to 29% of children in families with incomes of $30,000 or more. And children in low-income families are over two and one-half times more likely than children in high-income families to have a problem with one or more basic abilities such as vision, hearing, speech and mobility. Four- and five year-olds from poor families are twice as likely to exhibit delayed vocabulary development compared to children from middle-income families and are also twice as likely to be enrolled in remedial special education classes.*** (3rd ed., Canadian Institute of Child Health, 2000, p. 197)

Given the full dimensions of child poverty as described by Ross, it is little wonder that this factor contributes an important tectonic challenge to school 'equilibrium'. It clearly has important implications for Special Needs (3.1), behavior challenges, and other risk factors for children and youth.

---

[8] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, Canadian Institute of Child Health, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 182.
[9] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, p. 183.
[10] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, p. 183.

3.5 ***75/25...60/40.*** The Task Force uses these figures to represent what appears to be the commonly accepted ratio for children who are 'at risk' within the province's school system. By 'at risk' we mean simply that the child or youth is unlikely to complete school, and will drop out before high school graduation. Overall in the province at present the rate appears to be about 25% (thus 75/25). We gathered the distinct impression, however, that this rate is growing, and if significant intervention measures are not adopted that it will become 40% in the foreseeable future (thus, the 75/25 at-risk ratio appears to be moving towards 60/40). The consequence of this detachment from schooling in too many cases is, unfortunately, subsequent non-participation in the labour market, and a correlative probability of entrapment in a cycle of unemployment, poverty, and welfare, and in too many cases of running afoul of the justice system.

Obviously the at-risk figures represent a generalization that cannot be mechanically applied to every school, or even to every area of the province. In some schools the actual figure could in fact be much higher, and in others much lower. But there is widespread agreement that whatever the precise number is in every instance, overall it is growing and will become much larger over time. The reality is that for many school systems, even in some urban areas, the proportion of at risk children is already higher than 25% and, in some cases, as high as 40%.

The at-risk ratio is obviously a function of other determinants, especially poverty. When segments of a population experience high levels of poverty, we can expect a higher at-risk ratio. During the Task Force's consultations we were told of a high school in the province with 900-plus student population in which over 300 students dropped out last year; it was estimated that approximately 60% of these students were of Aboriginal ancestry.

The at-risk designation does not identify any particular sector of the school-age population, nor is it confined to any one area of the province, although obviously the ratios vary.

Finally, we need to take cognizance of the fact that 75/25 not only represents groups of students, but also social worlds. Moreover, these social worlds tend to exist as solitudes, sociologically speaking. This solitude aspect presents a very particular challenge when it comes to raising awareness and framing social policy.

The sizeable at-risk student population is, therefore, another tectonic factor for teachers and schooling, and its collision with the plate of traditional schooling is assured.

3.6 ***Pupil mobility.*** One of the tectonic factors that came to the attention of the Task Force is that of pupil movement, from school-to-school and out-of-school, during the course of the year. Mobility is almost certainly a function of some of the other factors, such as poverty and demographics. It also relates to the 75/25 at-risk student ratio.

But the magnitude of the mobility currently encountered by teachers, especially amongst the 25% at-risk pupils, is really quite astounding. There are elementary classrooms in large urban areas where not a single child is in attendance at the end of June who began in September. And there are many shades in between, of classrooms with 25%, 50% and 75% pupil turnover. There are high schools with 500 students who last year had 285 students leave the school, and another 150 join during the course of the year. Obviously teachers in these settings are called upon to drastically adapt their instructional strategies and programs, as well as their methods for the assessment of student progress.

3.7 ***Family changes.*** The topic of changes in family structure in contemporary society was frequently cited in the Task force's consultations.[11] It is important to note from the outset, however, that the impact of these changes for schools and education are indirect, and are derived principally from their association with other risk factors. There is, for example, no evidence whatsoever to suggest that single parents are any less devoted to their children than those in two-parent families, nor in many cases less successful in nurturing eventual high school graduates. What is unmistakable, however, is the challenge these parents often face and, thus, the additional support that schools and other human service agencies are called upon to provide. Frequently these challenges relate, directly and indirectly, to socioeconomic factors.

In 1995, for example, 57% of lone-mother families lived in poverty, compared with 13% of two-parent families, and 31% of lone-father families.[12] Moreover, the trend in the socioeconomic profile shows acceleration: between 1990 and 1996 child poverty amongst lone-mother families in Saskatchewan rose from 62.3% to 67.6%, with the 1996 figure being somewhat higher than the national average.[13] The number of lone-parents also shows a similar trend: from 1986 to 1996 the incidence of lone-mother families grew by 41.6%, and lone-father families by 42.4%. However, perhaps not surprisingly, lone-mother families make up the higher proportion: in 1996 the total number of lone-mother families was 5.7 times higher than that of lone-father families.[14]

Not surprisingly the socioeconomic profile has implications for the behaviors of children. In the following national figures, the first percentage number represents 'lone-mother', and the second 'two-parent' families, for three behavior categories: hyperactivity (17/10%); conduct disorder (19/9%); and emotional disorder (17/7%).[15] For the dimension 'difficult family relationships', similar impact is noted. For children aged 10 and 11 the percentage scores are: with biological mothers and fathers (28%); biological mothers only (61%); and biological mothers and stepfathers (45%).[16]

---

[11] See *Interim Report*, 2000, pp. 11 and 13.
[12] Saskatchewan Education Briefing Note, *Department Profile on Poverty and Related Issues*, as of May 15, 1998 (derived from the Canadian Council on Social Development).
[13] *Department Profile on Poverty and Related Issues*, as of May 15, 1998.
[14] Canadian Institute of Child Health, *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 9.
[15] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 221.
[16] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 205.

The challenges of family life are not, however, limited to the number of parents in a household, but extend to more general patterns of work and behavior for all families. The rise of double-income earners and the stresses relating to work place and commuting all contribute to family-related issues for children and schooling.

However understood, and whatever the ultimate sociological analysis of these phenomena, changes in family life undoubtedly represent an expanded opportunity and expectation for the role of the school, in tandem with other human service providers. These services range from early childhood intervention, nutrition, and special needs to the provision of before- and after-school care.

3.8 ***Cross-cultural issues***. The demographic shift which we have already noted (3.2) has created a variety of cross-cultural issues and opportunities for schools. There are fully justified calls for Aboriginal and other non-Western cultural groups to be more fully recognized in school life. The curriculum is an area of obvious concern, and quite serious attempts have been made over the last decade to include Aboriginal content at all levels of the school program.[17]

There are also efforts to accommodate cultural diversity in other ways, such as the various adaptations relating to the names of holidays, and other special days and celebrations. Solutions in this regard are often neither easy nor obvious. They vary from efforts to recognize and acknowledge a variety of high holidays and special days from many traditions throughout the school year to efforts that amount to cultural cleansing. Of the latter type, the translation of holidays like Christmas and Easter into seasonal events is a prime example. Oddly enough Halloween usually survives! Taken to its logical conclusion, however, the erasure of all culturally distinctive landmarks from the calendar will surely result in the creation of considerable distance between the school and the cultural context of its pupils.

The matter of racism is also important here. Often the discourse of culture can mask underlying issues that really relate to behaviors that can only be called racism.[18] In this regard it is certainly expected that schools will make a valiant effort to defeat this demon, and promote a fundamental respect for all races and peoples (for further discussion, see 3.14, *Student Attitudes and Behavior*).

Overall, however, it needs to be recognized that in spite of the accommodation and adjustment they require, issues relating to cross-cultural education represent socially welcome and enriching challenges for schools. In this sense, although their tectonic force may be of the earthquake variety, the changes occasioned by cross-cultural forces are positive rather than disruptive.

---

[17]The Action Plan of the Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee (IMEAC), *Partners in Action*, December 1991, is a good example of this sort of initiative, as are the development of new courses by Saskatchewan Education such as Cree and Native Studies 10, 20, and 30.

[18]This topic was helpfully addressed in a paper presented by Verna St. Denis and Carol Schick, at the WestCAST 2000 Conference, held at the University of Regina in February 2000. Their paper was entitled, "Why is Anti-Racist Education so Difficult?" Professors St. Denis and Schick are in the process of revising the paper for publication.

3.9 ***Human services integration.*** The expectation and need for schools to relate to multiple agencies is one of the most conspicuous features of its current role. Previously the connection between school, or school division, and Social Services and Health, for example, was relatively limited. Today, the call to manage interagency connections as part of the imperative to deliver a full range of services to children is a most conspicuous aspect of school operations and administration. Many of these services relate, of course, to the delivery of services associated with meeting special needs.

The strategy of delivering a wide range of services to children in a school-linked manner is not, of course, limited to Saskatchewan. The so-called 'full service school' has attracted attention all over North America, as well as elsewhere.[19] Saskatchewan has undertaken a number of initiatives in an effort to coordinate services and enhance collaboration efforts amongst the various human service providers.

The implementation of the Community Schools program in the province in the early 1980s was a major step in the direction of offering a broader range of support to at-risk children.[20] The position of Coordinator, along with the other program resources for which the schools were funded, was intended to provide links with families and other community agencies.

A recognition of the need for government departments to begin the process of breaking down their 'stove pipe' model of service delivery was expressed a few years later in the *Directions* report (1984), which laid the groundwork for the subsequent development of the province's Core Curriculum. The *Report* recommended that:

> *The Minister of Education should collaborate with the Ministers of Health and Social Services to establish mechanisms for the co-ordination of their services.* (Directions, The Final Report, 1984, p. 49)

More recently the development of Shared Services between and amongst multiple rural school divisions, the promotion of the concept of Integrated School-Linked Services by the Department of Education (Saskatchewan Education),[21] and the establishment of Regional Intersectoral Committees (RICs),[22] have all been major steps in the promotion of the interagency agenda. The RICs offer the opportunity for

---

[19]One of the leading writers in this field is Joy Dryfoos, and her book, *Full Service Schools – A Revolution in Health and Social Services for Children, Youth, and Families*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1994, is an important contribution to this literature.

[20]Initially some 16 schools were designated for funding in this program. Currently the program has expanded to 41.

[21]An excellent statement of this initiative is found in, *Working together to Address Barriers to Learning – Integrated School-Linked Services for Children and Youth at Risk*, Policy Framework, Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment, Planning and Evaluation Branch, 1994.

[22]There are currently 9 such RICs in operation throughout the province, typically comprising a wide variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies, including school divisions and representatives from the offices of the Regional Directors of Education. Each RIC elects its own Chair, and hires its own Coordinator. Many sponsor several sub-committees, each with different service foci, and various funds sponsored by departments for interagency projects flow through the RICs and are adjudicated by them.

representatives from a wide variety of human service providers in a region to sit at a common table and promote interagency programs and services. The RICs in turn relate to the Human Service Integration Forum (HSIF),[23] a table of senior government officials representing all of the human service departments.

Although the interagency agenda represents a positive step for the delivery of human services for children, given the fact that schools are the front-line providers of service, and given that it is especially in their interest for these services to be coordinated and school-linked, there is no doubt that this development represents a major expansion of the role of the school in contemporary society. It is not difficult to appreciate, therefore, how this sort of development represents a factor of tectonic magnitude for schools and schooling.

3.10 ***Rural depopulation***. Earlier we noted a major demographic shift taking place in the province associated with a significant growth in the numbers of school-aged children of Aboriginal ancestry (3.2). Another demographic movement that amounts to a tectonic factor for schooling is related to the population dynamics of rural Saskatchewan. It is well known that rural populations, and especially of school-aged children, has been declining at a fairly significant rate since the 1980s.[24] The most recent projections from Saskatchewan Education identify an acceleration of this trend. It is estimated that over the next decade the province's school enrolments will decline from 188,594 in 1999-2000, to 161,665 in the year 2010-2011. This represents a decline on average of nearly 2,250 pupils per year.[25] The largest proportion of this decline will be in rural areas. The figure of 2,250 represents the loss of the equivalent of a rural school division every year for the next 10 years.

The loss of population is further compounded by low commodity prices, losses associated with health care reform, rail line abandonment, and the negative impact of the land assessment process.[26] The latter provoked something of a tax revolt in some rural areas, with a particular focus on school taxes. Altogether, the picture for the rural areas is anything but conducive to reform or new initiatives, especially if the changes proposed are perceived, or can be construed, as in any way contributing to further rural losses. It is not too much to describe the situation of rural Saskatchewan in the language of trauma, and the understandable reaction of the population in terms of post-traumatic psychology. Certainly, the decline of school-aged children in rural areas, and all the implications of this phenomenon for rural communities and their schools, undoubtedly represents a factor of tectonic significance for education in the province.

---

[23] HSIF was previously known as the ADM's Forum (for Associate/Assistant Deputy Ministers). A Coordinator position for HSIF was recently created.

[24] In excess of 1,000 pupils per year.

[25] *Saskatchewan Education Enrolment Projections 1999-2000 to 2010-11*, Assessment and Evaluation Unit, August 2000, pp. 1-2.

[26] Especially since 1997.

3.11 ***Curriculum reform.*** The terms of reference for the Task Force do not specifically include curricular concerns, indeed, they make clear that the Core Curriculum is not under review at this time. Mention is made of the curriculum here, however, to draw attention to the fact that a major reform of curriculum was undertaken by the province in the mid-eighties.

The reform was based upon the growing understanding of learning and instruction. The *Directions Report* identified nine Goals of Education, and the Core Curriculum identified six Common Essential Learnings, and seven Required Areas of Study as well as a School Improvement Plan. The curriculum itself emphasizes resource-based learning and creates an Adaptive Dimension that allows classroom teachers to accommodate diversity in student learning needs.[27]

Even though the changes associated with the development of the Core Curriculum have been truly visionary, like all reforms it entailed – and continues to entail – stresses that are associated with change. For teachers, it has meant going about their business of instruction and organizing their classroom in different ways. In the metaphor we have adopted, therefore, the curriculum change is a tectonic factor for schools that has contributed to the disturbance of its 'earth's crust'. The fact that more than ten years later a major Saskatchewan Education thrust has identified the need to *actualize* this curriculum is eloquent testimony to the scope and depth of the reforms that were entailed.

3.12 ***Career concerns.*** For many decades, from at least the 1950s and onwards, career education in schools consisted of the administration of any one of a number of aptitude/interest tests of the day, which purported to diagnose students' interest in, and aptitudes for, various career options. Other than these relatively brief episodes of professional assistance, the rest of career education was a matter of informal influences, self-reflection and happenstance. Family, including parental role models, the encouragement of a teacher, summer work experiences, and just noticing careers that looked attractive and seemed feasible, were the chief sources of career education for adolescents and older teens.

Today career choice is emerging from the informal and accidental approach taken in the past into a distinct need, both real and perceived, in the minds of young adults today. It has become a matter of great concern and anxiety.

Undoubtedly the rapidly changing economies and technologies of the Information Age have created an environment of uncertainty around the issue of career choice. Conventional wisdom reflects this turbulence in the advice given to students to take a serial approach to career(s), and prepare themselves for jobs that exist *and those that*

---

[27]For the Adaptive Dimension see *Instructional Approaches*, Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment, 1991: "[The Adaptive Dimension] includes those practices the teacher undertakes to make curriculum, instruction, and the learning environment meaningful and appropriate for each student…[it] permeates all curriculum and instruction and is a part of all Core curriculum initiatives" (p. 31).

do not even exist now. The notion of life-long learning clearly comes into play in relation to this sort of thinking.

Career exploration is also doubtless furthered by the plethora of 'how to succeed' self-help books that encourage the pursuit of personal fulfillment and promote the notion of taking charge of our destiny, rather than being passive bystanders and victims. Quite apart from these influences, the imperative of trying to determine how to spend the better part of a working life, with all the implications entailed by this choice, is a perfectly natural object of both curiosity and anxiety. Whatever the origins of their desire, students today want help in making career choices.[28] And when students from the 10th grade are already earnestly grooming their c.v.'s, there can be no doubt but that this has become serious business!

Once again the expectation is that schools should step into the breach. The province's Goals of Education already mention career exploration, of course, but the current demands represent heightened expectation.

3.13 ***Violence.*** The phenomenon of student violence in school settings is a growing concern for teachers, and certainly for parents. The occurrence of recent, high profile, tragic in-school violence such as at Columbine High School in the USA, followed by the shooting of a student in Taber, Alberta shortly thereafter, have served to propel the issue into public prominence.[29] Although the statistics relating to youth violence are somewhat in dispute, it is not difficult to find numbers that appear to signal concern. For example, in a recent article in the *National Post* reporting on a student killing in Calgary, it is noted that, according to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, youth crime is 77% higher than a decade ago.[30] In the same article it is claimed that according to police in Toronto 1,448 violent incidents were reported in the city's schools in 1998, which represents a 162% increase over 1990.[31] Anecdotal comments from teachers confirm the growing anxiety around this phenomenon.

As disturbing as the high profile events are, the ongoing culture of taunts, threats and bullying is cause for at least as great concern, especially when account is taken of their role as a causal factor for other manifestations of violence (see 3.14 *Student Attitudes and Behaviors*). Although there are doubtless multiple causes of these phenomena, the role of media cannot be discounted.[32]

---

[28] "Students think their learning environment could be improved by...beginning career education earlier and ensuring career counseling is readily available to all students." *Interim Report*, p. 30.

[29] The Task Force found the lecture by Dr. Meredith Cherland, "Mission Impossible? Raising Kids Who Care," particularly moving. This lecture was delivered at the "Equity and Values in Our Schools Seminar," sponsored by the provincial Equity in Education Forum. Copies are available upon request from SIDRU.

[30] *National Post*, "$30 debt seen as motive in killing," Nov. 21, 2000, p. 1.

[31] *National Post*, "$30 debt seen as motive in killing," Nov. 21, 2000, p. 2.

[32] According to the *National Post*, the Canadian Safe School Network believes that, "...children and teenagers are saturated in violent images from video games, television and the Internet." Stu Auty, President of the Network, is quoted as saying, "Kids today are soaked in violence...Teachers will tell you they see them acting out these sorts of things in school playgrounds." (*National Post*, November 21, 2000, p. 2)

3.14 ***Student attitudes and behavior.*** One of the areas of concern that frequently arose in the Task Force consultations related to the behavior of children and youth. A comment frequently made by teachers, and echoed by others (including trustees), was that it now seemed incumbent on them to serve as surrogate parents in relation to children's emotional needs.[33] Doubtless teachers have always had a role to play in the emotional support and development of children, but now it seems this role is accentuated. Given the attitudes and behavior students manifest, the school is called upon to play a more active role in their character formation.

In light of these kinds of concerns it may be useful to refer to the findings of the authors of *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, a publication of the Canadian Institute of Child Health, now in its third edition. In this edition, for the first time, the Institute added a section on 'The Mental Health of Children and Youth.'[34] In his message as Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee, Graham Chance comments,

> *Children today face many challenges to their emotional and mental well-being. Targeted clinical programs have long since been overwhelmed,* making essential the introduction of carefully evaluated school-based, universally available prevention programs. (The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile, p. XII, emphasis added)

In this regard, suicide is surely a negative indicator of mental health and well-being. It is, therefore, alarming to note that in the 30-year period from 1961 to 1991, the incidence of youth suicide (ages 15-19) increased nearly 6 times for males (from 5 to 23 per 100,000), and 4 times for females (from 1 to 4 per 100,000).[35] It is important to remember that for every suicide there are multiple suicide attempts, so the incidence of disturbance in the minds of youth is even greater than these figures indicate. Moreover, especially for a province such as Saskatchewan, it must also be recalled that the incidence of suicide amongst Aboriginal youth is even higher than for the general population.

It would be folly not to recognize that at least some of the anxiety and mental disturbance represented by these suicide figures is also evident in behavioral disturbances at school and in the home. Certainly the anecdotal comments of teachers about the behavior of youth reinforce such concerns.[36]

Other indicators, even those tracked over a relatively short period of time, also give rise to concern about student mental health and behavior. The rates of students who

---

[33] See *Interim Report*, p. 28 (for views of School Board Members), and p. 31 (for teachers).
[34] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, Canadian Institute of Child Health, 3rd ed., 2000, chap. 8, The Mental Health of Children and Youth, pp. 199-226, the addition of this chapter as new is noted in the 'Message from the Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee,' p. XII.
[35] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, p. 140.
[36] See *Interim Report*: "Teachers note that while many students are well aware of their rights, they lack an understanding of their social responsibilities to others and frequently display a lack of respect for teachers and other adults in their communities" (p. 31).

experience bullying, for example, rose from 39 to 41% in Grade 6, and 36 to 43% in Grade 8, for males in the 4-year period from 1994 to 1998. For females the rate of increase for the same period of time was 30 to 35% in Grade 6, and 29 to 35% in Grade 8. Quite apart from the growth noted in these statistics, the lower numbers themselves indicate an unacceptably high level of incidence for bullying in schools.

The issue of violence generally has, of course, been highlighted by dramatic events in high schools, especially in the United States. There has been considerable reflection on the root causes of what appears to be a growing concern, and the massive exposure to violence in the media cannot be ruled out. Our purpose here, however, is not to analyze the source of this violence, so much as to note it as a context for teaching and schools today.

Other indicators that reinforce concern about children's mental health include, for example, the rate of children (girls and boys) aged 8-11 whose parents report that they appear "too fearful or anxious" is 37%, and for "cries a lot" the rate is girls 38% and boys 33%.[37] The incidence of child abuse is still another. In this regard the situation in Saskatchewan is particularly alarming: from 1990 to 1992 the mean annual rate of hospitalization for assault, and for abuse and neglect, birth to 19 years of ages, was 34/100,000 nationally, but nearly twice that rate in Saskatchewan, 67/100,000.[38]

Given patterns like this it is not surprising that some elementary schools anecdotally reported to members of the Task Force that school is seen as a safe place for many children, and that some show evidence of anxiety behaviors with the approach of weekends and holidays, especially Christmas.

Finally, by way of highlighting child/youth school behavior, it may be instructive for Canadians generally to take cognizance of some international comparisons with regard to the experience of positive behaviors in the school setting. In 1998, in Denmark and Sweden, for example, the incidence of students (13-year-olds, males and females) who reported that other students in their classes were "often" or "always" kind and helpful, was 78.25%, and only 46% for the same population in Canada! The source analysis of a differential like this is undoubtedly not straightforward, but its implications for character formation in schools must be pondered.

As the imperative for character education grows more urgent, however, the task itself becomes ever more complex. The growing cultural diversity of society makes the task of locating a core of shared values for schools, especially public schools, a matter of ongoing concern. To the mix of cultures as usually understood, some recent sociologists have identified a 'culture war' that now cuts across all traditional cultures in the "battles over the family, art, education, law, and politics."[39] Recent disputes

---

[37] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, p. 219.
[38] *The Health of Canada's Children: A CICH Profile*, p. 209.
[39] See, James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*, Basic Books, HarperCollins, 1991.

over school prayer probably reflect this sort of phenomenon, as do the current rates of enrolment of non-Catholics in the Catholic school systems in the province.

The compelling evidence of mental disturbance amongst Canadian children and youth, as well as the diversity of cultural wishes and expectations in relation to core values, undeniably pose a tremendous contextual challenge for schools and educators today. These challenges also raise important questions for the approach schools take to matters of character formation. Both the explicit (formal), and the implicit (non-formal, so-called 'hidden') curriculum, have considerable bearing on the value environment created for children and youth. And although the school has historically always played a key role in nurturing values, given the contextual factors we have identified in our contemporary society it is evident that the challenge represented by character formation for schools has considerably expanded in recent times. It is not too much to claim, therefore, that a shift has occurred in this area that amounts to another tectonic force with which the role of the school must contend.

The simple act of naming the range of change factors that have impacted on the role of the school in the past two decades is really quite sobering. When full account is taken of the forces they represent and their impact on school equilibrium, however, it will come as no surprise to discover how immediately many educators, and others, identify with an earthquake metaphor in relation to the role of the school in this context. Merely naming or identifying these factors is, unfortunately, not quite good enough. We also need to try and capture the meaning of these factors from several key vantage points.

We have tended to look at the range of tectonic factors from an external perspective, so we now need to look at what they mean from within the teacher's experience.

4.1 ***Teachers' experience.*** For starters, the cumulative impact of these factors is to create the experience of ambiguity and uncertainty about what it means to be a teacher. Of course, individual teachers will articulate the changes in different personal ways, but a theme that is quite common relates to multiple roles. Without attributing this remark to a particular teacher, the following statement would be representative of a widely shared teacher sentiment:

> *I used to just be a teacher, but now I am expected to be a parent, a nurse, a social worker, and an outreach worker for these kids. I can't ignore their other needs – and I don't want to – but it does make me wonder if I am really getting a chance to do what I was trained to do, and that is to be a teacher!*

The sentiment expressed here can be understood in a number of ways, but the dominant impression relates to identity, losing one and taking on many others. In some instances this loss is expressed in a way that is quite poignant, not unlike the

emotion of grief. As an educational administrator commented during our consultation process,

> *We are losing a very precious thing and that is that teachers are not being allowed to teach because they are dealing with social, health, and justice issues of children.*[40]

Here is trauma relating to the loss of something held very dear, accompanied by role uncertainty that only serves to reinforce the underlying anxiety.

Some teachers have articulated the experience in terms of a loss of boundaries. Where are the boundaries between their responsibilities, and those of other care givers? Which need(s) of children should teachers primarily attend to? Often, even as they articulate their feelings, teachers realize that to ask the question is already to begin to answer it. It is no use trying to teach a child whose basic needs such as hunger and emotional security are unfulfilled (back to Maslow's hierarchy of needs!). But the answer only creates something like a competition between the emerging role(s) of teacher as parent/healthcare/social worker, and the traditional role of public educator.

Not surprisingly the competition between these roles, and the consequent ambiguity about them, *is bound to result in a call for clarity*: "Just tell me what I am supposed to do!"

There is also the issue of how to draw the line between professional and personal responsibilities. Here the experience of teachers is very much akin to that of health care workers and social workers. But the tension for teachers is that while it is the role of health care and social workers to meet specified needs, teachers need to assume that a basic level of these needs *have been met* in order for them to get on with the act of teaching.

Teachers also noted the tension they feel between meeting the academic and the personal and social needs of children:

> *Much classroom time is spent on meeting the basic needs of students (making sure they are fed and nurtured) and, thus, teachers have less time to spend on teaching and preparation.*[41]

They also noted that,

> *They lack time during the day to give students the attention they need. This is especially true in classrooms where there are many students with special needs.*[42]

---

[40] *Interim Report*, p. 16.
[41] *Interim Report*, p. 32.
[42] *Interim Report*, p. 32.

Teachers, on the one hand, feel that society expects them to maximize student academic achievement, as measured by achievement on standardized tests, like the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, or the Provincial Learning Assessments (Saskatchewan), or some international comparison test. On the other hand, they are also aware of the quite considerable expectations society has for teachers in terms of meeting a wide range of students' personal and social needs.

Parents also made comments along this vein:

> *Teachers have difficulty fulfilling their role as academic instructors because, in many circumstances, classroom situations force them to take on the role of social worker, health-care worker, and psychologist.*[43]

There is obviously a tension between these different kinds of expectation for teachers. The more a teacher resolves the tension in one direction, the more the other tends to be ignored. Teachers feel that the only alternative open for them is to try and achieve some kind of balance between these various needs, but too often the balance is experienced as a failure to meet any of the needs adequately. So teachers are left with a dilemma. If they focus strongly on the academic program, they will probably not fully meet the personal and social needs of children and will be open to the accusation that they are 'disinviting' children from the school. If they focus on the personal and social needs, they will tend to neglect the learning needs and will be open to the accusation that they are failing children academically.

This tension experienced by teachers is exacerbated by the fact that improved retention rates mean that schools are home to a wider diversity of students for longer than they were in the past. The improvement in retention rates is not as well recognized as it should be. The fact is that overall these rates have improved dramatically throughout the second half of the 20th century in Canada. In 1950 the proportion of 20-year-olds who had not completed high school was 60%; by 1965 it was down to 30%; and by 1994 it was 19% nationally, and 16% in Saskatchewan, the second lowest in the country.[44] Obviously these rates do not apply evenly to all parts of the province, and all populations. We know, for example, that retention rates for students of Aboriginal ancestry tend to be lower. Nevertheless, the overall picture is one where a much higher proportion of students remain in the K-12 school system than they did in a bygone era. One factor in this retention, doubtless, is the information society expectation that prospective employees will possess ever higher levels of credential for almost any job or position available, including positions that were at one time regarded as unskilled jobs. The other factor is likely the successful effort of schools and teachers to accommodate a greater diversity of students and student needs than they did in the past.

This very success, however, underlines the importance of clarifying teachers' mission. Teachers care about children; they want to succeed – but what does society

---

[43] *Interim Report*, p. 26.

[44] Alberta's was 14%, Prince Edward Island was 25%; Statistics Canada, 1995.

really want them to do? Should they optimize support for a wide diversity of student needs, and students? Or, should they maximize educational outcomes as measured by standardized tests? What is the role of the school, and what is the role of teachers?

4.2 ***The new society.*** Historians often refer to the period when Europeans first arrived as the 'contact era'. The contact era is the period when the two cultures, First Nations and the European, first met. Obviously the date of this era varies with different regions of the continent, but for Saskatchewan it is associated with the inland journeys of Henry Kelsey (during the 1740s), and the establishment of the Hudson Bay trading post at Cumberland House (in 1776). Without going into the historical details, it must certainly be said that the first wave of contact had as its context the fur trade. Another period of contact transpired later in the 19th century, with the arrival of agricultural settlers, the signing of treaties, and the establishment of Indian reserves. Whereas Aboriginal people played a central role in the fur trade, it could be argued that, in the later agricultural period, they became somewhat marginalized from the social mainstream. By contrast, it must be recognized that the contemporary period has ushered in an era of 're-contact' that is at least as significant as the fur trade, except that its context is primarily education.

The 1970s and 1980s were decades of enormous significance for Indian and Métis peoples in Saskatchewan. They were the decades in which the notions of nationhood and self-government came to the fore. The vanguard of these efforts in self-government was, and continues to be, participation in and control of their educational system(s). These decades saw the establishment of Band-controlled schools, an elected Northern School Board (1976),[45] and the establishment of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC), the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT), the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Applied Arts and Science (GDI), the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP), the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), and the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP).

To these educational initiatives has been added, more recently, the movement of First Nations people from reserves to cities, and the establishment of urban reserve lands. Many believe that we are poised to see the establishment of a major parallel education system in urban areas, or perhaps, a new era of 'Public Education–First Nations Education' school systems, jointly governed, funded and co-managed.

The fur trade left an indelible imprint on the country,[46] nowhere more evident than in northern Saskatchewan. The treaties and reserve system are powerful ongoing realities. But the present era represents the birth pangs of an entirely new society, because it is witness to a kind of renegotiation of relations between the defining

[45] The Northern School Board was incorporated formally as the Northern Lights School Division No. 113 in 1978.
[46] The classic statement of the significance of the fur trade for Canada is the book by Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, University of Toronto Press, 1970; more recently John Ralston Saul has argued convincingly for the three founding nation theory (First Nations, French and British) in, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the Twentieth Century*, Viking, 1997.

peoples. Further, it can be argued that the principal context of this new contact period is that of education. The role of the school, humble as this might sound, could not therefore be cast in a more dramatic light. In this context, the role the school plays will determine the future and destiny of our province.

Educators and human service agencies in the province should not, therefore, see current issues relating to the demographic changes outlined in 3.2, *Demographic shift*, above, as just another program, or just another development. Instead, an opportunity of greatest significance lies before us – nothing more and nothing less than the forging of a new society. Since the vanguard of the new society is being shaped in the classrooms of the province, in all school systems, be they the Public system, the Catholic system, the Band schools, the Division Scolaire Francophone or the Historic High Schools, the role of the school will be crucial for success. Our educational system and the other human services agencies will all be faced with their own opportunities: choices must be made, policies fashioned, professional development afforded, and a wide range of services provided. Above all, the needs of children and youth of every race and color must be met, especially the need for good public education, if we are to flourish as a people.

Although the effort to meet this challenge will face many obstacles and forces calculated to divide us and frustrate our endeavor to leave a strong legacy for our children and youth, there are also strong traditions for coming together. The province has a history of transcending particular, vested interests in the larger cause of province-building. Many signs and symbols remain of this cooperative effort. Although the language may seem a little archaic today, the metaphor of a 'cooperative commonwealth' contains within its name not so much a partisan political movement as the spirit of a people that were determined to pull together in the face of adversity and challenge.

Much can be learned from the First Nations in this regard. Their profound bond with the land and their spirit of sharing the bounty of a hunt throughout the camp are instructive for us today. What we need more than anything else is what the Cree call *amawawi-atoskwewin* (working together). The new society that emerges from this spirit may not feature the most dazzling of economies by national standards – in any case such measures mean very little compared with truly human values – but it can be a beautiful place to live, a land where the sun shines and the rivers flow. It can, above many other things, also be a good place to raise and educate children.

4.3 ***Turning points.*** Metaphors have their uses and their limitations. The notion of the earthquake was invoked earlier to capture the sense of upheaval and change being experienced by schools as a result of the profound forces at work at the deepest levels of society. But earthquakes are, above all, disruptions, and their forces are sometimes highly destructive, in spite of the fact that they may occasion a rebuilding program whose achievements can, if resources are sufficient, sometimes exceed the splendor of what existed before. We have, however, reached the limit of this metaphor for schools. It is time to refocus the picture and see the powerful forces not so much as

disruptions as *occasions and opportunities*. At the risk of thoroughly mixing metaphors, we want to move from earthquakes to journeys. And journeys have critical moments that, ultimately, prove to be decisive for the future. We call these moments *turning points*.

There have been a number of turning points, or decisive periods, in the development of education as we know it in North America. Certainly one such turning point related to the development of public schooling, or the 'common school' as it was known. This critical era of development was reached in the middle of the last century in both the United States and Canada. It was during the 1840s and 1850s in America when the Friends of Education took up the cause of a more unified and uniform, state-sponsored education.[47] As a result of their efforts the wide assortment of colonial schools was gradually transformed into a state system of education that proved to have significance for the whole continent. The principal features of their reforms sound strangely familiar to us even today:

- Tuition-free elementary schools (known as *common schools*), supported by local and state taxes;
- Standardized curriculum offerings and teaching materials;
- Pupils grouped into graded schools;
- Licensed teachers; and
- Parents compelled to send children to school for a specified number of days per year.

Whatever we may think of this way of organizing schools, there can be little doubt that it proved seminal for the organization and delivery of public schooling elsewhere.

Meanwhile, an equally salient development took place in Ontario where a relatively uniform and centralized system of public education was developed under Egerton Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Schools (1846-76).[48] Clearly schools were singled out to play a key role in the development of,

> *a national identity and consciousness informed by Anglo-Christian values and a deference to the ideals of British monarchy and parliamentary democracy.*[49]

The role of the common school, its practices and the curriculum, also addressed and were shaped by powerful contextual forces:

---

[47]The leaders of this reform were James Carter and Horace Mann, from Massachusetts, and Henry Barnard, from Connecticut. Mann became known as the 'father of the common school'. The story of this movement may be found in standard histories of American education. For a reasonably brief and very accessible account see, Smith and Smith, *Education Today, The Foundations of a Profession*, St. Martin's Press, 1994, pp. 249-251.
[48]Douglas Stewart, *The Place of Schooling: A Journey in Humanization*, a paper presented to the provincial Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School, December 1999, p. 1.
[49]Stewart, *The Place of Schooling*, p. 2.

> *...the nation was struggling to define itself amidst an emerging industrial economy, massive immigration from Britain and Ireland (and later Eastern Europe), the threat of domination by American attitudes, the French fact, and conflicts between church and state over control of education.*[50]

The manner in which these forces were addressed, and the role and practices of the school that were forged in Ontario, proved to be decisive for other parts of the country too. Most notably, for the purposes of our Task Force, they became a model for the development of schooling on the prairies.

More recently, a highly instructive but very different turning point in Québec could be cited. In the early 1960s the Province of Québec found itself in the throes of deep concern about public education, at the school and post-secondary levels. The government of the day appointed Alphonse Marie Parent, P.A., to chair a Royal Commission on education. The *Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Québec* proved to be decisive for the future of education in that province, and makes truly fascinating reading even decades later.[51]

The *Report* highlighted a 'crisis in education' and went on to address a whole host of issues confronting the society of the day that included: the projected massive increases in enrolment (what we refer to today as the post-war baby boom), the revolution in science and technology, pre-industrial Québec, urbanization, renewal of the democratic spirit, the evolution of the churches, internationalism, the new concept of the role of women, and the welfare state (which it contrasted with the 'police state' of the last century), to name only a few.[52]

Québec society was in fact emerging from the grip of an earlier regime, especially as regards the relations between church and state. The Parent Commission made a significant contribution to this evolution; its reforms proved salient especially for the Francophone population whose educational opportunities lagged seriously behind their Anglophone counterparts. The initiatives that emerged included the establishment of a Ministry of Education, the CEGEPs,[53] and the Université du Québec. Nearly 40 years later Québecers can be justly proud of their achievements, and the institutions they founded as a result of the Commission have become world-class.

Moments such as these, the development of the common school (public education) and the reforms of the Parent Commission, are highly instructive for us today. They

---

[50] Stewart, *The Place of Schooling*, p. 1.

[51] *Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education, in the Province of Quebec*, 1963, commonly known as the 'Parent Commission'. The Task Force is indebted to Dr. Miriam Bailey for drawing our attention to this parallel with the work of our Task Force. Dr. Bailey worked for many years in post-secondary education in Québec, as well as later, with post-secondary education with the Government of Saskatchewan; she is currently an international consultant.

[52] *Royal Commission Report*, see especially Chapter 4, "Education and Contemporary Society," pp. 57-71.

[53] The CEGEPs (Colleges d'enseignement général et professionnel) are community colleges, but also serve as something like Junior Colleges in relation to the universities in Québec.

demonstrate that even a host of challenges, and a society in the throes of vast changes, can represent significant moments of opportunity for education. They are in fact turning points, and the turn separates between those who merely lament and those who are prepared to follow a vision. It is precisely in these critical moments in the life of a nation, or a province, when education and especially the role of the school can become a decisive factor.

[redacted]

5.1 ***Historical reflection.*** Education in its most general sense consists of all of the efforts made by a society to pass on its language, beliefs and culture to its children and youth, as well as the skills necessary for their survival, and if possible their flourishing. In the early stages of society, education was achieved primarily through a kind of apprenticeship by working alongside adult members of the community, the tribal group, the village, and much later the city. Gathering, hunting, cooking, war, storytelling, nurturing the young, art, tool-making, and in fact the vast array of skills and understandings necessary for the preservation and perpetuation of the rich tapestry of life, were all gained by living and working alongside those who already possessed them. Later education became formalized in various ways in various cultures. Usually, schools were limited to groups that today we might call elites – the Greek freemen, children of nobility, or those destined for careers in government and the church. For a very long time, education in the formal sense was, therefore, regarded as a matter of privilege and reserved for the few rather than the many.

Eventually in the Western world, however, the notion of the common school was born, an institution sponsored by the state that offered learning opportunities for all members of the society. By now we are familiar with the fact that for a considerable period of time 'society' was still far from inclusive of all its members. We recognize how long it took for various racial and ethnic groups to become fully included in the school system, if they are now, not to mention differentials of opportunity relating to gender that have only been seriously addressed in universities and colleges in the last half century. Nevertheless, a universal right of opportunity for all to learn has become slowly but surely recognized and supported by the state. And for children from five or six years of age, until their middle or late teens, that opportunity has been institutionalized primarily through what we now call the school. What is, or was, the purpose of the school, and what role does it play in society?

Education is predominantly understood as a liberating force and as an empowerment of the learner. For precisely this reason educational opportunities in the past have often been reserved for elites and for the children of already privileged families. Even when schools have been commandeered for darker purposes of social engineering, as the residential and industrial schools were employed in efforts to 'de-feather' Indian children, the potential always existed for the strategy to undermine itself. Consider the number of Indian leaders who were products of the residential

schools but who used their learning to become eloquent spokespeople for "Indian control of Indian education," and "self-government."

A similar kind of emancipation potential has been noted regarding the development of schooling in Victorian England. Sir Llewellyn Woodward, in his classic work on early industrial Britain, notes, for example, how 'self-made and successful men' (e.g., factory owners) recognized that "...an educated working class meant an increase in labour troubles."[54]

Because they always tend to include some seeds of genuine enlightenment and learning, however imperfectly nurtured, schools have in fact also tended to be the doorway to social improvement and amelioration. It was for reasons of amelioration that church societies sponsored the 'ragged schools', an extension of the Sunday School in 19th century Britain, to provide opportunities for betterment to working-class children.[55] Robert Owen introduced infant schools in connection with his factories,[56] and people like Dr. Thomas Barnardo included educational opportunities in the operations of his remarkable orphanages during the later part of the 19th and early 20th centuries.[57] In recent times in our own province, schools and occupations related to schools have served a similar purpose. Schools have been a door for successive immigrant populations into the social mainstream and into a variety of employment opportunities. During the last century teaching was one of the gateways for women into professional employment, and it is not by accident that the first efforts to provide similar opportunities for First Nations and Métis people focused on teacher education.[58] Not only do Aboriginal teacher education programs provide access to professional employment, but the nature of this employment obviously is strategically placed to influence the lives of children and youth, and to impact the structure and content of education itself.

---

[54]Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *The Age of Reform, 1815-1870*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1962, p. 474. Lord Shaftesbury was a leader in this regard.

[55]Woodward, p. 477. Lord Shaftesbury was a leader in this field, as in others relating to the ameliorating Factory Acts in the first half of the 19th century in England; see, J. W. Bready, *England Before and After Wesley*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1939, pp. 357-360.

[56]Woodward, p. 476. Interestingly enough Woodward goes on to note that Owen got into trouble with some of his fellow directors of his business (who were Quakers) for including music, dancing, and preparation for military drill in his schools! His opposition to religion also put him "...out of court with religious bodies who were carrying out educational work on a large scale," p. 476f.

[57]J. W. Bready, *Dr. Barnardo*, Allan & Unwin, London, 1930. A comment on Barnardo's taking over the Copperfield Ragged School is instructive for our own day:

> [previously] 30 per cent of the attendants on a single morning have been known to reach the School without breakfast, the other 30 per cent had only had a piece of dry bread before leaving home, while 60 per cent expected no dinner!" [subsequent to Barnardo's Mission taking over the school and including a food program] ...this school presented for Government examination 455 children; and 402 – 88 per cent – passed in *all* subjects....reluctantly, the Government learned from Ragged Schools the folly of trying to educate a child's mind while his stomach was gnawing with hunger. (p. 166f)

[58]Programs cited earlier. The Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP), in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, was the first in the province. It was followed by the Department of Education in the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC), at the University of Regina, as well as the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), and the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP).

The role of schools in relation to social betterment, and the contribution of learning to social empowerment has, of course, also been the subject of critique and challenge. Some, reflecting Karl Marx's notion that the ideas of a culture are captives of its economic system, and ultimately serve as an ideological bastion for its power, have argued that often the objectives of schooling are too closely tied to corporate interests. They see the structure and goals of education, for example, as having been allied with the interests of the industrial revolution, and today with the market economy. The conclusion of such reasoning is usually, however, not that schools should be eliminated or replaced altogether, but rather that they should be liberated from subservience to their economic masters.

In any case, the point is that schools do not exist because of a timeless essence which materializes in some mysterious way in different periods of history, but rather that schools are social institutions, and creatures of society. In the most general sense, of course, the purpose of schooling is educational, but what that means at any given point of a society's life is a matter for reflection, diagnosis and assessment. Periodic reflection and assessment are necessary because society is constantly changing, its economy as well as its peoples and their cultures. Not surprisingly, in times of greater social change, more changes and adjustments in schooling may be anticipated. Changes in educational systems are not determined merely by social changes, however, because they also reflect *ideas* about what schools should be like, and how education should be conducted. In other words, education and schooling will be a product of ideas about schooling, as well as a reflection of their social context.

As we noted earlier, schooling in Saskatchewan in the late 20th century has been subject to quite profound changes occasioned by social changes, as well as ideas about education and the role that schools play. Of the social changes, we noted the changing demographic profile of the province, especially the increase in the number of Aboriginal children amongst the school-age population, and the sharp decrease in the rural population; changes in family structure; poverty; and the growth of information and other technologies. Of the ideas, we noted the curriculum reform relating to the *Directions Report,* which is based upon a growing understanding of instruction and learning, as well as the major shift in public policy relating to the adoption of a philosophy of progressive inclusion for children with special needs.

It is, therefore, most appropriate at this moment in our provincial history for us to reflect carefully upon what we want our schools to be, and especially to reflect upon what the needs of our children and youth are, and how schools fit into this picture. Indeed, it is not too much to suggest that Saskatchewan finds itself in a situation not unlike those we identified earlier, in America, Ontario and Québec, when they faced major turning points (4.3). Externally, the population of the province is profoundly changing and, from within, society has raised a host of new expectations relating to the needs of children which it counts on the school to fill. So what is the purpose of school?

5.2 ***Function, purpose and power.*** The title of this section may seem rather esoteric, but in fact it goes to the essence of what institutions like schooling are all about. Moreover, as we will see, an understanding of each of these concepts is necessary in order for us to understand what a concept like the 'role of x' actually means (where 'x' stands for an office, institution or individual). First let us consider the basic meaning of the terms we are using here and then go on to use them to examine the function, purpose and power of schools.

By *function* we mean to include everything that an institution does. *Purpose*, alternatively, comprises the primary goals of the institution, its mission and possibly its mandate. *Power* here is used to refer to the capacity of the institution to achieve its purpose, and the influence that the institution has in society with its clients, with citizens, and with the community members at large.

The special thing about purpose is that an acknowledged or recognized purpose defines an organization's role, and 'role' carries with it responsibility(ies), obligation(s) and duty(ies), thereby creating legitimate expectations. Functions, on the other hand, consist of everything that an organization does – including everything that furthers its purposes – but a great deal more besides. *Now we can see that 'role' is ambiguous: it includes acknowledged purposes, but it can also be used to designate a whole host of other functions that an institution may have.*

So we can say that the function of schools and school systems includes: educating children; being the custodians of children for specified periods of time, according to a school year; bringing many different kinds of children together in a common room and facility; attending to the well-being of children within their care, including responsibility for the administration of specified medications, as well as meeting a variety of social and personal needs, such as clothing, nutrition and the provision of emotional support; employing people; owning or leasing property; running advertisements in newspapers; holding meetings; operating within the mandate of a legislative act (in Saskatchewan, *The Education Act*); administering funds, and preparing financial reports; purchasing supplies and equipment. The list of what at any given time any given school might actually be doing is, of course, pretty much endless. All of these things and many others can be said to be the school's function and, thus, the general 'role' that school plays in society.

When, however, we refer to '*the* role' of the school, with an emphasis on *the*, usually we mean something more narrow than every function schools have. By *the* role of the school we are, in fact, raising the issue of *the purpose of schools and schooling*. Function and purpose are related but they are obviously not just the same thing. When we raise the issue of purpose, we designate the particular aspects of the role that carry responsibility, obligation, and duty and which, therefore, create legitimate expectation.

Many functions, for example, are means to an end; they are roles the institution may play but they are not the reason the institution exists. Take schools, for example –

they employ people and usually own or lease property, but that is not their purpose. When we want to talk about purpose, especially the purpose of something (like schools), we may use the language of function but qualify it in special ways: so we would say – yes, all of these are functions of schools, but I want to know about the *real function* of schools, or the *distinctive function* of schools. When we speak like this, we are in effect raising the question of purpose: the distinctive function of schools is the reason they exist, their purpose or *raison d'être*.

This little excursion into conceptual clarification is necessary if we are not to become confused in our discussion of the principle topic of the Task Force, and the reason for writing this report, namely, *the role of the school*. It will now be quite apparent that the role of the school is not a simple, much less a singular concept; it is in fact quite complex and we need to be very careful about what we are saying. Especially, we need to distinguish between roles related to the purpose of schooling and those that relate to other functions. *Functions are what schools do; purposes are what society intends to accomplish by having schools*. The distinction becomes especially important when it comes to the assessment and evaluation of their performance.

Since functions are multiple and include many means to an end, when assessing an organization's performance it will not be enough to cite a few or even many functions to sustain the argument that the organization is performing well. It is in fact quite possible for an organization or institution to perform many functions extremely well but fail miserably at the primary function, or purpose, for which it exists. Entertaining plays have been built around this theme, perhaps the most famous of which is the episode of the British comedy, *Yes, Prime Minister*, in which the Prime Minister's Under-Secretary (Deputy Minister) vigorously defends the performance of a new hospital on numerous grounds (efficiency, economies, cleanliness, qualifications and expertise of its staff, professional development, and morale, etc.), even though it has not gotten around to admitting any patients! The Prime Minister is bewildered. The assessment of a 'good performance' is, therefore, not a simple thing.

Before addressing the question of the role of the school in this analysis, it is vital that we note one more thing about functions and purposes. It is simply this: functions are reasonably descriptive whereas, very often, goals and purposes are not. To claim, for example, that an organization or institution performs functions *a, b, c* is not in itself generally a controversial matter. It is usually simply a matter of checking to find out if *a, b, c* are actually happening.

But purpose is another matter. Some questions of purpose can be pretty much settled by an appeal to a text of some kind, a piece of legislation or a statement of organizational goals or mission; but often such appeals are not enough. They are not enough because when the question is raised, especially along the lines, "...but what is the real purpose of x?", then something else enters into the discussion, and that something usually turns out to be a question of value. Questions about the real purpose of, say, 'x' in fact raise issues like: what *should* x be, or what *ought* x to be? In other words, there is something normative and often prescriptive at stake here.

So, for example, if someone answers a question about 'the role of x' along the lines, "...well x does this and that...," or even, "... x is mandated to do this or that in legislation," or in some "mission statement...," it will always be possible to argue, yes, I know x does these things, and I know what it says in the Act/Mission Statement, *but I want to know if that is the real purpose of x*? In other words, when questions about the role of something (like x) amount to questions about the real purpose of that something, they almost invariably come down to questions about values or beliefs (in a normative sense).

This tendency for questions about purpose to come down to values is why they often create so much controversy, and why they are difficult to settle. Obviously questions about roles that relate to the purpose of an organization will, by the same token, also come down to questions of value. It does not mean that we cannot discuss such things rationally, and give reasons for our beliefs or values, but it does mean that they are not simply questions of fact or description. Thus, logically speaking, it will never be good enough to say, "x is doing *a, b, c* (as a function)," or even, "...the mission statement says our goals are *a, b, c*" and expect that to settle a debate about the 'purpose of x'. It will, in fact, always be possible to say, yes, x is doing a, b, c, *but is that its real purpose*?

All of this may seem a little abstract, and somewhat far removed from the classroom realities of the role of the school. But in fact it is absolutely essential that we clarify some of these notions if we are to proceed with a discussion of the role of the school with a minimum of ambiguity, and a minimum of argument at cross purpose. *Especially, we need to recognize that the question of the purpose of schools* (i.e., the end or goal of schooling) *is value-laden* and, therefore, will always be an open question. It can never simply be a matter of describing functions.

Normally, however, we are inclined to think that roles that relate to the purpose of an organization are more important than those relating to other functions. But even this belief seems open to challenge.

Sometimes it begins to look as if some mere functions may take on more importance than an organization's formal purposes. This apparent anomaly occurs because the assessment of an organization's functions and purposes takes place within a wider framework of values and beliefs. We illustrate the complexity of such frameworks when we say "it's not winning or losing, it's how you play the game that counts." Here we say that, yes, the purpose of the game is getting more points than the opponent (or, however the game works); but we add the proviso, the purpose of winning should be subsumed under a more important value. So here we see that the purpose of the game (winning), can be understood to be less important than one of its functions (playing together).[59]

[59]It is tempting in instances like this to say that the function (playing together) has become the real purpose of the game; and to argue further that 'winning' is merely the formal purpose. In other words, we want to resist cutting 'more important functions' away from purposes.

Finally, there is the third concept cited in our title, *power*. Power, as we are using it here, is the capacity of the organization or institution to accomplish its purposes. Power is also the influence of the organization, in the broad sense of all of its functions. So power questions also need to be assessed in the light of function and purpose. Power questions are, therefore, very broad and can be ambiguous: for example, an institution's influence with respect to many roles (functions) might be very great, but it may or may not have much capacity to accomplish its real purpose. It is possible to be influence-rich, and purpose-poor. But speaking of rich and poor – yes, power does have to do with resources. As we examine functions and purposes we will usually want to include the capacity of an organization to perform its functions and accomplish its purposes, that is, its will, understanding, expertise, and skills, as well as its financial and human resources.

5.3 ***So what about the role of the school?*** Now let us try to make an application of this analysis to the question being addressed by the Task Force, the Role of the School. The question of roles, as we have seen, raises issues of function, purpose, and power. The question of function can be answered by looking and seeing what schools do. We have already noted that schools do many things. Some of what schools do is best understood as a means to an end, like employing people and putting up buildings, but other things are more or less accidental to both the end and the means.

Sometimes these accidental functions are barely understood until a disruption occurs. The role played by school holidays (not likely a primary purpose for schooling!), for example, was never so well understood as when school systems tried to alter the school year. Suddenly summer industries surfaced and their dependence on the employment of high school students became a big issue! The issue was likely clearer earlier in the century when school holiday cycles – and universities too – were more closely tied to the agrarian lifestyle, and there was a conscious dependence upon students to do jobs on the farm (especially during seeding and harvesting).

Although, as we have already noted, the role of the school comprises everything schools do, when we ask about *the* role of the school we usually intend to ask what functions schools have in relation to their social *purpose*, namely, why we have schools in the first place. We are especially interested in these roles of the school because, again as we have already noted, they are the roles that normally carry responsibility, obligation and duty, and thereby create legitimate expectations. Many implications follow from this conclusion.

For example, where roles associated with an organization's acknowledged purpose are not performed, then the issue of culpability arises, and the organization can be faulted. Non-performance relating to *mere functions*, however, are not culpable. That is to say if something is not a purpose-related function, then schools cannot be faulted for the failure to perform it well (or at all!). But on the other hand, if roles are added to the purpose of an organization and they cannot be fulfilled for lack of resources, then an obligation to provide adequate resources falls upon the larger entity responsible for that organization.

So if *A* is a role of the school that relates to the acknowledged purpose for which schools exist (i.e., a legitimate role), and schools are not performing it well, then they may be faulted. But on the other hand if society adds to the list of expectations for schools (say *B* and *C*), and schools do not have adequate resources to perform *B* and *C*, then society is under obligation either to provide sufficient resources or relieve schools of these additional roles and responsibilities.

For A, you might want to think of 'teaching children to read', 'learn to do numbers', or 'learn about the peoples of Saskatchewan', or 'ensure that playground activities are well supervised'. If schools do not perform these functions, legitimate questions may be asked. But for B and C, consider any number of other possible functions: 'teach children to use computers well' or 'learn how to make informed career decisions' or 'administer medications for pupils' or 'provide learning environments for all children, including those with extreme learning or behavior problems'. If functions like these are currently expected of schools, they have been 'added on', because they have not been part of the school's role historically. If we now want these roles added to the school's responsibilities, then we will clearly need to ensure that we have provided them with adequate resources. Otherwise, we must expect compromise of the school's ability to deliver its historically mandated responsibilities.

Because the analysis of roles relating to purpose is always somewhat ambiguous, however, and we are sometimes not certain whether a function is one that relates to purpose or not (i.e., whether it is merely a function), issues can turn out to be quite contentious. Take, for example, the custodial function of the school. Is it part of the purpose of the school, or is it an accidental function, a mere by-product of how schools usually operate? Sometimes this role is pejoratively referred to as the 'baby-sitting' function. Whatever it is called, the analysis of the question is not simple because it raises the issue of purpose, and as we have already noted questions of purpose are invariably value-laden; they speak to what an organization or institution should do, or ought to be, not simply what it is.

Do schools have an obligation to provide a custodial function, and to what extent? Merely pointing out that that is not the real purpose of schools does not settle the matter. Remember, some *mere functions* can prove to be just as important, or even more important, than the purpose of the organization. It all depends on how you look at things, and what you count as most important.

Thus, even if the custodial function is not a formal goal of education in the minds of some people – and from the perspective of their day-to-day lives – it may in fact be considered to be at least as important, or even more important than the formal, generally acknowledged goals of education. But then, have we not simply added a function to what we call the role of the school, and made this additional function part of the school's purpose?

Schools may not primarily exist for a custodial function but, alter it ever so slightly, and see what happens! For example, suppose we say that high schools exist for the

primary purpose of education and that the custodial function is becoming a barrier to success. Suppose a college model was advocated where the attendance of Grade 11 and 12 students outside of class hours was not required.

Is the school at fault if students do some harm to the community when they are not on campus? We will say "yes" only if we agree that the custodial function is a role of the school related to its fundamental purpose, or perhaps, if we are willing to acknowledge that we have added this role to the purpose of the school. But as things currently stand, how far is the custodial function part of the role of the school? And how far does it extend? When does it begin, and when does it end? At 7:00 a.m., 8:00 or 8:30 a.m., at 3:30 p.m., or 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.?

Given the shifts taking place in society, these are the very questions that we need to be asking. We also need to be clear about the implications of our questions. If we recognize a function to be part of the school's role (i.e., a responsibility related to purpose), then we are obliged to provide adequate resources. Otherwise, we must drop the responsibility, or perhaps, agree that the school must compromise the services rendered in some other fundamental area of its role.

Or let us take a very different example. Although schools do not exist primarily for the purpose of hiring people, this function cannot be ignored. In some historical settings, and from some perspectives, the school's role as an employer might be weighed more heavily than issues that relate directly to its educational role. So, for example, given the pressures of rural depopulation and the corresponding losses to communities – rail lines, hospitals, stores and the like – the role of the school as employer suddenly takes on heightened significance. But if we add on a role like this to the 'purpose of the school' list, then we must acknowledge the need for a commensurate allocation of resources.

There is also the issue of competing and conflicting purposes and the question of how to balance them. Because resources are finite, there will always be difficult decisions about how best to expend scarce and precious resources in connection with education as there are in other walks of life, especially other human services. For example, there is a question about the school's role in fostering excellence by some absolute or comparative standard against the school's obligations to provide learning opportunities for everyone. Both are legitimate ends; both are agreed purposes. But how much is one to be weighed in light of the other?

Of course, good answers to questions like the one about competing interests will try to demonstrate that the alternatives are not really competing, or that one without the other is meaningless. Along this line it could be argued that excellence without universal opportunity is no kind of excellence at all. While attractive in some ways, reasoning of this sort is not always convincing, and it rarely absolves us from the obligation to make difficult choices.

Ultimately, the question of the 'role of the school' is one about purpose: why do we have schools at all? Our growing expectation of school raises the question, is our purpose for schooling different than it was 30 or 40 years ago? If so, have we fundamentally changed our purpose for schools? Certainly, everything the Task Force heard in its consultation process reflected impressions, beliefs and values related to society's expectations of schools and schooling. Many of the comments and viewpoints also made assumptions, or reflected beliefs and values, about the *purpose of schools*.

Ultimately, as a Task Force, we need to try to bring some clarity to the issue of purpose, otherwise it will become lost amongst the plethora of tasks and expectations which clamor for attention. We may, in some cases, need to identify functions that relate to legitimate needs of children and youth, but delegate them to other, more appropriate, agencies and institutions. If we do choose to add functions to the legitimate purpose of schooling, however, then we must also add resources.

5.4 ***Beliefs and values, sources and commitments.*** Although the Task Force did not begin its deliberations with a formal set of first principles relating to education, some things can be said about the sources that influenced us, and some of the values that we prized. For starters, obviously we thought of schooling in the general context of public responsibility. We believe strongly that the whole community, including the state, needs to take responsibility for the education of children and youth. Schools are mandated to provide public education.[60] In a real sense *The Education Act* is merely the formal, legislated framework for accomplishing that end.

A more complete statement of the recognized purpose of public education in the province, however, is found in the *Directions* Report, especially its statement of the 'Goals of Education in Saskatchewan – 1984.' With respect to these goals the Report identifies a number of categories and elaborates upon them; they include Basic Skills, Life-Long Learning, Understanding and Relating to Others, Self-Concept Development, Positive Life Style, Spiritual Development, Career and Consumer Decisions, Membership in Society and Growing with Change.[61] The Task Force concurs with these goals and affirms them as an eloquent statement and a useful framework within which to address the role of the school today. As helpful as they are, however, the goals stated in *Directions* will not in and of themselves be sufficient to settle the range of issues that have been identified under the rubric the 'role of the school'.

The Task Force was also struck by some other statements about the purpose of schooling. In particular, one of the expert papers we solicited, written by

---

[60]Note here, and throughout this document, the term 'public education' refers to all publicly-funded schools and school systems. Thus 'Public Education' includes the Catholic and Separate school divisions, and the Division Scolaire Francophone, as well as school divisions commonly referred to as 'public school divisions'.

[61]*Directions, The Final Report*, Minister's Advisory Committee Curriculum and Instruction Review, February 1984, pp. 26-28.

Dr. Doug Stewart, proved to be quite compelling. In a paper entitled, *The Place of Schooling: A Journey in Humanization*, Stewart argues for the view that,

> *...the primary "good" at which schools should aim is the humanization of children and young people or of helping them become persons "more fully."*[62]

In particular Stewart argues for the role of the school in relation to heightening, "... the consciousness or awareness of each individual." Drawing upon the work of R. S. Peters (1974), he explicates this view as:

> *...namely to empower individuals to make greater sense of the world and of who they are, a progressive "initiation" into the achievements of human mind and spirit...These achievements...include the natural sciences, the human or social sciences, mathematics, literature and fine arts, moral understanding, and religious or spiritual understanding.*[63]

Although the Task Force quite rightly began its consultations on the role of the school by focusing upon the changing needs of children and youth, Stewart's presentation was a strong reminder that one of those needs – and the need that schools have been specially mandated to address – is the need for learning experiences calculated to promote the growth of mind and spirit.

Over and above these statements about the goals of education, the Task Force was committed to a framework of justice, equity and fairness. This commitment was not based upon any particular document or presentation, so much as simply a foundational belief shared by all members of the Task Force. By identifying a commitment to these principles the Task Force is not contending that they are the special purpose for which education and schooling exist; rather, we are saying that all of the functions and purposes of school should both reflect and be constrained by these principles. We believe that these principles are consistent with the kinds of goals for education that informed our thinking, as noted above. If education should endeavor to provide learning experiences that contribute to the 'humanization' of children and youth, then it will want to do so in ways that foster justice, conform to equity, and are seen to be fair.

It is precisely the commitment to justice and fairness that lay behind our decision initially to examine the role of the school through the question: what are the needs of children and youth?[64] By adopting this approach it was not our intention ultimately to avoid the question "What is the mission or purpose of schools?" But we intentionally did not want to begin with this question. As we have seen through our analysis of

---

[62]Stewart, *The Place of Schooling*, p. 1.
[63]Stewart, p. 6.
[64]See section 15, So What is the 'Role of the School'?, *Interim Report*, p. 82. There we address the issue of having omitted the question, what is the mission of schools? We argue that posing the question this way raises "...the assumption that somewhere behind the word *school* there is lurking a *meaning phantom*...In fact the mission of the school is a social creation...." (p. 82). The point here is to try to help us see that what school is, and will be, is a matter of choice, decision, and public policy, not the meaning of words (especially the word *school*!).

functions and purposes above,[65] these are conceptually complex questions. Had we begun with this sort of debate we could easily have become distracted from getting a clear picture of the changing needs of children and youth, which justice, equity and fairness demands. Once we have that picture more clearly in focus, we can re-examine the goal(s) and purpose(s) of schools in relation to these needs.

Although various statements of educational goals can be acknowledged, and commitments to foundational beliefs and values affirmed, there can be no doubt that in the complex task of arriving at its recommendations the Task Force had to fall back on its collective wisdom, and what in the end can only be described as 'good judgement'. There is no set of first principles from which we could simply deduce an arbitration on the competing values of, for instance, the promotion of public education and trying to meet the needs of all children. Inescapably this task calls for wisdom and good judgement. We hope we have demonstrated some of these qualities, but we make no apologies for the failure to construct a set of first principles. Indeed, we contend that in the present context it is precisely a vision born of good judgement that is most urgently required.

[redacted]

Saskatchewan and its schools have come to a turning point, a time of decision. The earthquake metaphor is a reminder that schools are responding to change forces the impact and magnitude of which is surely unprecedented in the province's history. The philosophy and practice of progressive inclusion with respect to needs diversity in themselves represent a major expansion of the role of the school and its staff. This model of special needs accommodation is, however, a policy direction we share with the other provinces in Canada and educational jurisdictions all over the continent. But when proper account is taken of this province's demographic changes in relation to the significant growth of children of Aboriginal ancestry within school enrolments, and the quite profound changes occurring in rural communities in relation to the family farm and rural depopulation, it becomes quite evident that we are about something much more than accommodation and adjustment – *we are in the throes of creating a new society!*

The birth of this new society represents both a challenge and an enormous opportunity. Moreover, there can be no doubt about the fact that the school will play a crucial role in transforming the challenge into an opportunity. The task of equipping the school to play this role requires three things: *vision, will* and *resources*.

Vision is needed to capture the insight that the times in which we live are unusual, and that they require unusual policy interventions and resources. We will fail to understand the role of the school if we believe that everything is pretty much business as usual; that the challenges the schools face today call simply for a little problem solving here, and a little fire control there. Nothing could be further from the truth.

---

[65] See 5.2, *Function, purpose and power*, p. 31.

The fact is that what we have called an earthquake, seen from the side of social experience, really amounts to something like a revolution. And 're-volutions' call for a change of thinking. In the language of Thomas Kuhn, the adjustment we are impelled to make in thinking and public policy amounts to a paradigm shift.[66] For schools, as we will argue in the next section, this calls for seeing them in a new way – we call it **School**^{PLUS}.

Will is needed in order to move from insight to action. Although we call School^{PLUS} a new vision for schools, community, and human service partnerships, many of the ideas we propose have been around for some years. Few revolutions happen overnight; often the ideas and debates take place over a period of time. The revolution occurs when decisive steps are taken to translate ideas into action. And make no mistake about it, political will is essential to the implementation of the recommendations we make in the next section of our report. The 'political' is, of course, intentionally a small case 'p' but, in this case, it carries a large case responsibility! The whole village is needed to raise the child. We will all need to be involved, schools and educators, parents, students, community organizations, churches, school boards, government, and government agencies.

We recognize that an appeal to action now may give the impression that we do not value the efforts that have already been made. So we want to acknowledge immediately that many good and laudable steps have already been taken. Indeed, our intention is simply to build on what has been begun. Having said this, the Task Force feels strongly nonetheless that we have come to a kind of impasse, and that to move ahead will require energy and resolve.

Resources are needed in order to translate the vision into reality. Resources will also be a measure of our resolve. The times in which we live call for significant intervention, and generous investment in the lives of children and youth. It is clear that expectations for schools have grown and expanded; it is absolutely clear that more cannot be expected of schools without a corresponding expansion of support. By expanded support, we want to stress that we mean incremental support, not just the reworking of old dollars. These expenditures will not target Education alone; our vision addresses all of the human services.

But the expenditures we call for are not merely of a financial kind; they embrace human resources too. If we are to adopt a new paradigm for the operation of schools, then many changes will be required from everyone connected with this vital enterprise.

Change is always difficult; it invariably requires effort. Change associated with a mission that arises out of a vision can, however, sometimes call forth what is best in the human spirit. Saskatchewan has risen to such challenges in the past. The Task Force is confident that it can do so once again.

---

[66]Kuhn develops these ideas, and especially his notion of paradigm shift, in his book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, originally published in *The International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, vol. 2, no. 2, University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Our achievements in the past, the cooperative society and Medicare, are helpful signposts. They demonstrate what can be done when historical and social challenges – especially those associated with urgent human need – are met with vision, resolve and the proper allocation of resources. Our past achievements are all the more remarkable and instructive when full account is taken of the adversity of their circumstance. In the end, however, signposts from the past are not enough. We will have to begin a journey of our own – a journey to recreate the school and human service environment in the image of our children and youth; that is, an environment shaped to their needs.

SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools are becoming something they have never been before. To date we have simply expanded expectations and, in some cases, added a few resources. The time has come to recognize the situation for what it *is*, to name the whirlwind. *The Task Force believes that we need to build a new kind of institution dedicated to the needs of children and youth.* We have as a society been moving in this direction but we have done so almost inadvertently, not acknowledging the scope of our demands, and certainly not recognizing the full financial and human costs entailed by our expectations.

Historically, schools have been charged with responsibility for public education. Great vigilance must be exercised in the protection of this trust. Instead, for some time, we have been asking schools to deliver more and more services and meet more and more needs that 'school' was never intended to meet. Yet, these needs of children and youth must be met and, more than ever before, it makes sense to meet them in association with schools. The Task Force believes that the answer to this dilemma of the role of the school, and the apparent competition between public education and the other needs of children, should be met not by asking 'schools' as they are presently constituted to do more and more but, rather, by creating a new environment altogether. In what follows we have called this environment **School**[PLUS].

We say 'environment' because as we work our way through the recommendations it will become clear that we are actually moving conceptually, from changes and adjustments within the current system to an approach that amounts to the creation of a new structure. 'Environment' will serve, therefore, as a placeholder to span the gap between modifications to the current system, and the creation of a new entity altogether.

We say 'school' because we want to signal our determination to preserve the vital role of public education as a service for children and a sacred trust for society. As we move further and further towards the new environment, however, it will be come clear that the 'school' in School[PLUS] names a mission that has become contextualized in a wholly new way, one that centers on the needs of children and youth.

We say 'PLUS' because the recognition of the needs of children and youth as presented in the school environment today requires much more than public education. School cannot provide all of the 'much more'. Indeed, if we foist this expectation on schools we must expect serious compromise of its role as public educator. Nevertheless, we repeat, the needs are very real and it seems evident that a serious attempt to meet them must be made by society in association with schools.

We say 'in association with schools' because, outside of the home, the school is the front-line human service agency; teachers see children almost every day, and for significant periods of time in the day. Within the realm of public agencies school is thus the most immediate and the most natural context for addressing the needs of the whole child.

For these reasons the Task Force sees the school of the future within a larger human service network. We see the *School* dedicated to public education; we see the *PLUS* providing an environment of other human service support for children and youth. School was never intended to meet the needs of the whole child and neither were any of the other human services. If, in fact, we want to meet the needs of the whole child in an integrated manner, then we will certainly need a new human services agency network; but for the 'net' to 'work', the strands will have to be bound much more closely together than they are now.

Although the Task Force is proposing the concept of School^{PLUS} for the network that is needed to provide an integrated service environment for meeting the needs of children and youth, we are not bound to this particular term. Indeed, some members of the Task Force prefer terms like 'Community Learning Centre' or 'Community Education Centre'. The term itself is not, ultimately, terribly important; but the concept of public education taking place within the larger context of human services – by whatever name – is vital. Of course, the concept can be turned around; instead of school in the context of other services, we could say that we see the other human services for children and youth in the context of school. As we have already made clear, by 'context' here we mean something more than a loosely connected, good-will gathering; we are talking about a net-worked, truly 'inte-grated' agency.

Whatever name is ultimately given to the concept, in School^{PLUS} we are seeing an institution that does not yet exist. Certainly we see movement in this direction but, too often, it has been accomplished by steps taken *in spite of* what school and the other agencies currently are: separate and distinct agencies. We argue that services to children and youth urgently need to be seen more holistically, although we recognize that in the transitional process we must take care not to lose vital functions performed by the distinct services, including that of public education.

The recommendations that follow reflect the movement of our thinking from changes to (and within) the present educational system (K-12), to changes that amount to the creation of an altogether new system. The recommendations are divided into 4 sections, each of which addresses a different aspect of our vision:

A: Structure, Roles and Partnerships

B: Programs

C: Support

D: Implementation

A: Structure, Roles and Partnerships outlines the core components of our vision to locate public education within a supportive environment of integrated services and programs for children and youth. We begin with Community Schools, which are foundational to our thinking. From community schools we begin to consider concepts that entail even more fundamental changes in the way that education and human services are offered in our province. In order to better address the needs of children and youth we examine and make recommendations relating to human service integration. Integrated services lead us to consider a full School^{PLUS}

environment that draws upon all of the governmental, non-governmental and community resources available to children and youth. This environment has important implications for the roles of teachers and in-school administrators, for partnerships with students and parents, and for Human Service professionals. We conclude this section with a consideration of these roles and partnerships.

In **B: Programs**, we look at various programs, and program changes, contained within our vision of the School[PLUS] environment. These programs address a wide variety of needs and issues, from youth-not-in-school, to information technology, to extracurricular education, high schools, and others.

In **C: Support**, we look at the important issues of the facilities and funding necessary to support our vision, and in **D: Implementation**, we make recommendations pertaining to the implementation process relating to our report and the development of an action plan.

[redacted]

We begin with Community Schools, a movement within our present system that has captured our imaginations as well as our admiration. We see in them a concept whose internal logic leads inexorably to interagency cooperation and School[PLUS].

[redacted]

We strongly affirmed the Community School program in the *Interim Report* (pp. 60-62), and we do not need to repeat this material. Our Phase 2 consultations have only served to confirm our commitment to the wisdom of the Community School approach, and our vision of Community Schools as a vanguard of the School[PLUS] concept. We have, however, noted a number of things about Community Schools which need to be examined; we discuss them in what follows and we attempt to address them in the recommendations.

The first issue has to do with a problem of nomenclature. Community Schools as a concept is intended to be much broader than what the term actually connotes in the province at the present time. Currently 'Community School' designates a school that receives funding support according to a formula specified by the Department of Education's Community School program. In other words 'Community School' currently in Saskatchewan is more or less equivalent to a particular funding schedule. This practice has a variety of unfortunate implications and side effects.

Being tied to a funding formula, Community School has not represented a philosophy or practice that could be extended beyond the formula. Yet, it seems obvious that Community School is a philosophy of operating schools that is not bound to any single funding formula. Certainly added resources are always helpful, and sometimes essential, but the extra funding does not define Community School as a philosophy for operating schools.

Provided they are operated in an appropriate manner, schools could get more money or less money than the Saskatchewan Education formula, or no extra money at all, and still be *community schools* in a perfectly valid sense of that term.

Another limitation of the term Community School in the province at the present time is its application only to schools where there are high ratios of 'at-risk' children. Again, there is no reason to think that the philosophy and practice of a community approach to schooling needs to be, or even should be, limited to high at-risk student populations. In fact the Task Force believes that a community school philosophy and practice has value for all schools and all students. We resort to Community Schools in the case of 'at-risk' children because we are impelled beyond the status quo by the sheer magnitude of the needs we are trying to address. And taking this approach to schools makes the difference – they work. They work because the philosophy and practice they embody is the best way to operate schools.

Again, based upon the particular funding program adopted by the province in the early 1980s, we have limited Community Schools exclusively to elementary schools. Only within the past few years have attempts been made to adapt the Community School approach to a high school setting, but such initiatives have been taken without the benefit of additional funding support from the Community Schools program. The Task Force has been impressed by these efforts, however, and believes that they deserve support from within the Community Schools funding envelope.

Finally, current usage has stereotyped Community Schools as a core and perimeter area phenomenon. Indeed, there have been reports in our consultations that some communities have resisted the implementation of a Community School designation for their school because of the stigma that it would give their community, not to mention the impact on property values.

In light of these considerations, the Task Force proposes the following recommendations relating to Community Schools. In what follows, the first number of a recommendation will represent the section heading (e.g., Community Schools is 1.), and the second number will represent the number of the recommendation under this heading (thus, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.). Where there are budget implications for government, these are identified in square brackets just below the recommendation.

1.1 ***That a Community School philosophy be adopted for all public schools in the province.***

[$400,000 in 2001-2002 – to support promotion and development - and $300,000 for each of the next 3 years]

By Community School philosophy, the Task Force intends schools which recognize and promote the following values, beliefs, and goals:

- A school that views itself as an integral part of the community;

- A school that views the whole community, its agencies, organizations, businesses, trades, churches, and so on, as a resource for the school;
- A school in which parents are valued as partners in the education of their children; where every effort is made to give them meaningful involvement in establishing the goals of the school and in the design of the educational program;
- A school in which the culture of the children and the culture of their community is strongly reflected in the school;
- A school in which a sincere effort is made to adapt the educational program to the needs of the children, to give them an optimal opportunity for success;
- A school that takes a developmental rather than a deficit approach to children; that begins where the child is and endeavors to take the child as far along the path of learning as possible;
- A school in which pupil consultation at all levels, but especially at the middle years and high school levels, is an important consideration in the determination of school policy and practice;
- A school that views its facilities as a resource for the community and seeks to find ways to share this resource under appropriate supervisory conditions.

1.2 ***That the educational partner and stakeholder organizations, including the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents (LEADS), the colleges of education and parent organizations,[67] study the issue with a view to finding appropriate ways to support this philosophy within their jurisdiction and their membership.***

And, recognizing that the implementation of a Community School philosophy for all schools has major implications for the concept of school leadership,

1.3 ***That all of the educational stakeholder organizations do everything within their power to promote an approach to leadership and school administration that is consistent with a Community School philosophy that,***

- ***Seeks to be collaborative, rather than adversarial;***
- ***Seeks to promote the development of staff, rather than merely exercising control;***
- ***Seeks to share power and value team work;***
- ***Possesses negotiating and mediation skills;***
- ***Seeks the common interest base in an attempt to resolve conflict;***
- ***Values morale and organizational climate;***
- ***Finds ways to meaningfully consult student opinion, and attempts to adapt the school program in light of this input;***
- ***Values parents as partners in the education of children;***
- ***Sees the community as a resource, and seeks ways to incorporate these resources in the life of the school.***

[67]By 'parent organizations' we refer to the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils (SASC), Parent-Teacher Associations, Parent Councils, and the like.

1.4 ***That Saskatchewan Education takes the following steps to address the concerns identified above, by:***

- ***Renaming the funding schedule adopted for Community Schools, in light of the fact that potentially all schools in the province will eventually (we hope) become Community Schools;***
- ***Separating the concept of Community School from the funding schedule; for example, calling the funding formula an 'at-risk student factor';***
- ***Enhancing its Community School unit so as to be able to support and promote a major Community School initiative throughout the province.***

The Task Force recognizes that a Community School philosophy cannot – and should not – simply be imposed. Indeed, to attempt to do so would fly in the face of the Community School philosophy itself. Schools should be designated Community Schools only when the in-school administration and staff indicate clear support for the Community School approach, and where the school has developed a plan for implementing this approach in its community. Saskatchewan Education, as well as the other stakeholder organizations can, however, play a key role in promoting and supporting these developments.

1.5 ***That the Community School funding program (as it is currently known), continue to be expanded.***

[$2.4 M for equivalent of a 12-school expansion, @ 200,000 per school, in 2001-2002 and $2.4 M for each of the next 3 years, but see 1.6 re: implementation of a graduated scale]

The Task Force notes that the current program has grown from the original 16 schools to 41. This represents *commendable progress* over a period of 20 years. At the same time, given the current criteria for funding, over 100 schools in the province qualify for funding. In light of the community schools' remarkable success, the evolving social profile of the province, and the growing indicators of student needs, the Task Force sees value and urgency relating to expansion of the Community School program ('at-risk' student factor funding). In light of the socioeconomic profile of the north, it will be vital to ensure that its needs are fully recognized in the expansion.

1.6 ***That the expansion of the 'Community School' funding schedule (the 'at-risk student factor') include the potential for a graduated scale.***

The Task Force notes that the at-risk factor in schools meriting additional funding support varies from community to community, and even from school to school. Many schools merit support according to the current full-funding formula, but in other instances a graduated support would be indicated. Flexibility in the allocation of the resources could make meaningful adaptations of support that would, for example, distinguish the needs of core and perimeter areas.

1.7 ***That the expansion of the 'Community School' funding schedule (the 'at-risk student factor') include the designation of high schools as well as elementary schools.***

[$3.5 M for 14 schools @ 250,000 per school in 2001-2002 and $4.5 M for each of the next 3 years]

The Task Force notes a variety of reasons to expand the Community School philosophy and practice to high schools in the province. Attrition is most marked at the high school level, even more than in elementary schools. Furthermore, where pupils graduate from Community Schools and go on to traditional high schools, they experience a serious culture shock, increasing the likelihood of attrition. Finally, efforts to transform secondary schools along a Community School line have demonstrated considerable potential for success.

As an implementation strategy, the Task Force recommends that an initial pilot project phase be implemented, at the earliest possible date, that would result in the designation of at least 8 Community School high schools for 'at-risk' funding equivalent to the current Community School program. It seems apparent that the Department's capacity to provide expertise and support for this initiative will need to be expanded.

As with the current elementary program, high schools should be required to demonstrate commitment to, and readiness for, a community approach in order to qualify for the designated funding. After a period of 3 years the program should be reviewed, renewed and expanded. As the program evolves the same considerations that apply to the elementary program, regarding the possibility of a graduated approach, should also apply to the high school program.

[redacted]

The location of the school within the nexus of a wide variety of governmental, third party, and community-based human service organizations is the essence of School^{PLUS}. The Task Force believes that the implementation of a Community School philosophy will promote the involvement of community-based organizations and enhance their role in the school. The relationship of other governmental services and third party agencies (like Health Districts), however, represents a significant administrative challenge and calls for special attention. Again, this topic was broached in the *Interim Report* (pp. 68-73, under the title, "The Interagency Imperative"), so there is no need to repeat the comments we made there. Our consultations during Phase 2 of the Task Force in Fall 2000 have only confirmed the wisdom of the direction we established in the earlier report, although further elaboration of our vision is obviously needed.

The Task Force recognizes that a number of positive steps have already been taken towards promoting better interagency cooperation. The creation of the Human Services Integration Forum (HSIF) and the Regional Intersectoral Committees (nine in the province) are

examples of these positive efforts, as is the development of Shared Services between and amongst school divisions. In order to proceed further along this path, however, some of the structural barriers that are currently in place need to be addressed and further incentives to real collaboration created.

The current structure with discrete agencies, each with its own distinct budgets, lines of accountability and reward systems, needs to be replaced by an *interagency network* with more permeable boundaries between the departments, and funding and reward systems that are calculated to strongly promote collaboration. Furthermore, as far as services to children and youth are concerned, *interagency* needs to be articulated, not merely in general terms, but emphatically in terms of *school-linked* and *school-based* services. The Task Force suggests that this network be called the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN – pronounce 'season').

The Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN) would be much the same sort of entity as 'authorities' created to manage complex operations related to a single purpose or geographical area. Thus, we have port authorities and those responsible for complex services like transportation or parks. SEAHSN could also be seen as a cooperative because it is a creature of, and draws its services from, all of the contributing agencies – public education, and the other human services (Health, Social Services, Justice and Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training).[68] SEAHSN's integrating focus is the needs of children and youth. *The point of the exercise is not, therefore, to promote 'interagency' as an end in itself, but rather, to see interagency collaboration as an essential strategy to optimize services for children and youth.*

In this document, School^{PLUS} should be understood as the name used to identify the complex of services offered by the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network. We will elaborate upon these concepts later.

Finally, although the Task Force has heard concerns about the dangers of creating another bureaucracy, it must be recognized that no further progress can be made towards better service integration without the expenditure of some incremental monies. Although cooperation is essential, it is not enough. If real gains are now to be made, we must move from cooperation to collaboration. *But collaboration cannot occur without a coordinating capacity.* This capacity does not currently exist – its creation will cost some money. The Task Force believes, however, that the general reluctance to spend money for another level of coordination needs to be tempered by the *golden rule* of interagency development: *a modest investment will yield enormous dividends* – we call it the 'catalytic effect'.

In chemistry a catalyst does not create a new chemical; rather, it enhances chemical change under specified conditions.[69] The Task Force sees a coordinating function *as the catalyst*

---

[68] The input of other departments, such as Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, would also be important.

[69] Many readers will recall from their high school chemistry how the presence of manganese dioxide, mixed with potassium permanganate, greatly accelerated the capacity of the latter to produce oxygen when heated. Similarly, platinum and other chemicals are used in catalytic converters to promote the combustion of exhaust gases in today's

needed to release the full capacity contained within the organizational compound of human services. Furthermore, the integration needs to become explicitly school-linked, and sometimes, school-based, if services to children and youth are to be optimized. The Task Force sees the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEASHN) as the general authority needed to bring coordination and integration to this service complex.

Although the Task Force does not have a detailed blueprint for SEAHSN, we can describe what seem to be the basic elements that are required. We provide these elements in the spirit of suggestion, and with emphasis upon process, recognizing that SEASHN's eventual structure and organization is best left to good judgement and evolution. With this caveat, however, three basic elements seem to be essential:

A. Cabinet mandate
B. Provincial-level structure
C. Regional and local centres, programs and activity

A. SEAHSN by its very nature must be the creature of a government, not any one department. For this reason some of our recommendations below are addressed to Cabinet. Although the Task Force on the Role of the School is a creation of the Minister of Education, we have come to the inescapable conclusion that the answers to the needs of children and youth raised by questions about the role of the school *call for a public policy initiative that encompasses all of the human services, and third party and community agencies as well.* For this reason we see the need for both a 'top-down' and a 'bottom-up' approach to the required change process. SEASHN represents nothing less than a reform of government services to children and youth; there can be no doubt that it requires a mandate and authorization from the Cabinet – from the top down.

B. Although a 'network' is not a rigidly defined structure, it does require coordination, resources and energy. SEASHN will, therefore, need coordination at the Provincial level. This body could be called the Provincial Council or Authority. The Council would address the most general issues of policy, strategy and mechanism required to implement an integrated, school-linked service for children and youth in the province.

   In the longer term an evolutionary process needs to unfold that will ultimately become extremely broad-based. In the short term, in order to get the whole process started, however, there will need to be consultation and planning, especially between government departments and the educational partner organizations (the SSTA, STF and LEADS). Perhaps the best way to think of starting this process would be to imagine a Council consisting of the members of the Human Services Integration Forum *plus* representatives of the education partner organizations.

   Before this stage, however, it is difficult to see things really beginning without a series of meetings that include the Deputy Ministers from the Human Service departments

---

automobiles. Catalysts have the chemical effect of lowering resistance to change, and this is precisely what is needed in the organizational analogue.

(including Saskatchewan Education, of course) and the senior executive officers of the educational partner organizations. Their task would be to create a framework for implementing the goals of the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network. Once the framework was in place, SEASHN's Provincial Council could address the operational issues and questions.

C. There will also need to be regional and local initiatives. Although these initiatives will be impacted by deliberations and decisions at the provincial level, local and regional groups do not need to await the resolution of all of the provincial issues before taking steps towards enhanced integration. Regional and local initiatives can, and must, take place immediately – from the bottom up. The goal is integrated, school-linked services for children and youth. From the start, local and regional initiatives can occur within the limits of current structures. Moreover, regional and local initiatives will raise issues that require provincial-level consideration and resolution. In turn, progress at the provincial level will provide regional and local initiatives with a framework, and improved policies and organizational mechanisms.

The recommendations that follow, amongst other things, address the issue of mandate and authorization; issues relating to the other elements are addressed in the next section when we deal more specifically with School^{PLUS}.

2.1 ***That the responsibility for School^{PLUS} be seen as belonging to all human service departments – Social Services, Health, Justice, Saskatchewan Education, Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training – as well as their third-party agencies, and community organizations.***

In this vision School^{PLUS} is seen not as a creature of Education alone, but instead, as a creation of all the human service departments, their third party agencies (like School Divisions, Health Districts, and homes for troubled youth), and community based organizations. Moreover, we see the needs of children and youth as the rationale for this nexus, and we see the school, and school systems, as the articulation point for the delivery of services.

2.2 ***That Cabinet authorize the creation of an authority responsible for public education and the integration of human services to children and youth; and, that this integration be articulated so as to create services that are school-linked and school-based; and further, that the authority responsible for this integration be known as the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN).***

As we have already noted, the Task Force sees the need for both 'top-down' as well as 'bottom-up' movement in the effort to create an integrated human services environment for children and youth. Top-down calls for the endorsement and resources of the provincial Cabinet. Bottom-up calls for an invitation to local officials and communities, in response to Cabinet endorsement and resources, to develop creative and flexible solutions designed to overcome the barriers that exist between services.

After careful reflection the Task Force is convinced that there is no simple 'magic bullet' that will solve the problem of services integration. We are equally convinced, however, that significant progress can be made towards service integration that preserves the mission integrity and expertise of each of the human services, while at the same time creating a strongly networked environment. In our view, this network must be rationalized in relation to the needs of children and youth and should foster cooperation and collaboration towards this end. We call the authority responsible for this service coordination the **Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network,** and we call its integrated public education and human services program, **School**[PLUS].

2.3 ***That in keeping with this reform Cabinet create an Interagency Fund: a) to support the creation of the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, and b) to allow the Network to deliver a wide range of integrated programs and services for children and youth within the School***[PLUS] ***environment.***

[$7,250,000 in the first year; and $23,500,000 per year for the following 3 years; see APPENDIX 1, Budget Estimates, for a breakout of the allocations to the different government departments]

Recognizing that a prototype of SEAHSN needs to become operational quickly, but that its ultimate shape and evolution need to be effected over time and through consultation with other agencies, especially third parties with responsibility for public education, the Task Force urges a staged, evolutionary process for SEAHSN. In light of these considerations the Task Force recommends the following procedures and guidelines for the expenditures associated with this fund:

- That a preliminary prototype be established with responsibility for the initial expenditure of this interagency fund, with a view to the development of a full-blown authority responsible for public education and human services for children and youth;
- That Senior officials from departments with responsibility for public education and human services for children and youth meet to establish an action plan to create a SEAHSN prototype that has as it goal an integrated, school-linked approach to human services for children and youth;
- That senior officials create a process to identify deserving projects on the basis of a broad invitation to local communities and agencies, as well as organizations like the Regional Education offices, school divisions, Health Districts, RICs and other human service agencies;
- That ample scope be given for larger scale projects, and projects which have long-term potential, in addition to shorter-term pilot projects;
- That a reporting process be identified which ensures full reporting to government and the public.

The Task Force recognizes that responsibility for coordinating these projects in a manner that is school-linked and/or school-based may be achieved in a number of ways, and that this decision may be best determined at a local level. The Task Force suggests the following possible approaches:

- Regional Education offices can perform an important coordinating function, and some of the Fund's resources should be used to support this enhanced role;
- School Divisions can also play an important role in the allocation of these resources, especially in collaboration with officials from the other human service agencies;
- In-school administrators (Principals or Vice-Principals), working in tandem with local human service officials, are vitally important to the integration of services; the Fund needs to allocate monies for the purpose of purchasing increased administrative release time for in-school administrators;
- Local RIC Coordinators are an important resource;
- Staff members from one of the other human service agencies, in close consultation with school officials, could provide a coordinating function, and the Fund could be used to purchase their time from their home department (Health, Social Services, or Justice).

The Task Force believes that the coordinating function should be understood organizationally as a matrix, where Education and the human service agencies bring resources to the larger School^{PLUS} environment in order to create its programs. Figure 2 illustrates the basic matrix structure. In this environment personnel have responsibility both to their home Department, and to School^{PLUS}. For further explanation of this environment and the matrix structure, see 3, The School^{PLUS} Environment.

Figure 2

Program → / Agency ↓	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
W							
X							
Y							
Z							

The range of potential projects that can be mounted on the basis of this structure is very wide and amongst other things might include: provision of school-linked social workers, attendance officers, intervention workers, and outreach workers; provision of school-linked public health nurses, mental health services, speech and language pathology workers,

behavior counselors, addiction counselors, or nutritionists; provision of court workers or justice-related youth counselors, alternative measures programs, or school-linked constables (resource officers); as well as the offering of anger management programs, parenting classes, social skills programs, cultural advisors, daycare facilitators, and the like.

It will be recognized that there are instances of all of these services in existence at some schools at the present time. True, but there is conspicuous shortage and the Task Force believes that there is need for *a significant expansion* of these services. We also believe that the expansion is *an interagency responsibility*.

The monies identified for the Interagency Fund should be used for new services, not for existing programs. New services may be provided through the creation of incremental expenditures, or alternatively by non-education human service agencies *reassigning existing staff* to work directly with schools, or school divisions, in the spirit of school-linked and/or school-based service delivery (with a matrix accountability profile).

Since the monies advocated here by the Task Force are modest by provincial budget standards, the best way to create the fund is on the basis of new monies assigned by Cabinet. The Task Force feels that the creation of this fund would be an appropriate, minimal response to the exigency profile of the province's children and youth already described in this report. It will also help to strengthen the interagency culture necessary to the establishment of a School^{PLUS} environment.

2.4 ***That the human services integration reform authorized by Cabinet incorporate a revision of the performance review criteria applicable to government officials so that contributions to services integration are recognized and rewarded; and further, that this recognition include all efforts to cooperate and collaborate with other human services agencies, both within government and in the community-at-large.***

The Task Force believes that if a new culture is to be created within government agencies, one that fosters interagency cooperation and collaboration, *then the reward system for the officials responsible for implementing the reform needs to reflect this priority.* These criteria need to apply to all levels of government officials, including the office of Deputy Minister.

2.5 ***That Cabinet recognize the significant dysfunction created in the province by the lack of coterminous boundaries for its human service agencies, and take whatever steps are necessary to address this problem and effect a solution.***

The Task Force found ample evidence of inconsistency in services and frustration amongst both clients and service providers relating to the absence of coterminous boundaries for human service agencies.[70] Given the size of the province's population and its geographical distribution, the fact that few if any existing boundaries for human services either at the local or regional levels are coterminous has become intolerable. At the same time the Task Force recognizes the significant effort of political will that is needed to effect a solution to

[70] By '*coterminous*' we mean '***share common boundaries***', and thus jurisdiction over a common geographical area.

these problems. *The Task Force, therefore, proposes several alternate strategies for addressing this situation.* The Task Force believes that the province's delivery of human services will be seriously handicapped unless decisive action is taken on at least some of these alternative proposals. **The Task Force recognizes as ideal a reform that would see coterminous boundaries for all human service agencies and, perhaps, other services too, along the lines of a county system.** The Task Force does not endorse county governance of multiple services, where one board or council is responsible for all services. But *the concept of common boundaries* for Health, Social Services, Justice and Education, not to mention other services, is an imperative. At the same time we also recognize, however, that a complete reform along these lines *may not be politically feasible* given the current climate. In the absence of truly fundamental reform the Task Force proposes the following alternative strategies:

2.5.1 ***That consideration be given to the creation of coterminous boundaries for Education, Health, and Social Services at a regional level within a three-year time frame.***

[$500,000 multi-agency support, for 2002–2005]

In this proposal Regional Education offices, Health Districts, and the Regional Offices of Social Services would be made coterminous. It is also proposed that the various functions and services falling under the umbrella of Justice be rationalized as far as is possible within this regional service approach.

In the meanwhile,

2.5.2 ***That the Regional Education offices be charged by Cabinet with the responsibility to work with the Health Districts and Social Services offices in their region to effect a rationalization of services for children and youth, so as to ensure that any given school division will relate to only one office with respect to a particular human service.***

[$500,000 in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years to allow Regional Education offices to support rationalization of services to children and youth]

The Task Force calls this the 'single jurisdiction' model, because it assures each school division that it will need to relate to no more than one office (jurisdiction) for any given human service. On this model, for example, there would never be more than one provider (office) for mental health services to a given school division. Currently, there are school divisions that negotiate their services with two, and even three Health Districts. A similar situation prevails with respect to the other human services.

The Task Force is painfully aware of the slow and ponderous pace of school division amalgamations in the current voluntary environment. The result is that Saskatchewan

has just over 2% of the student population in Canada, but more than 20% of the school divisions. In the absence of sufficient political will to address this situation – at all levels – the Task Force is concerned that the health, education and well being of children in the province is being jeopardized.

The Task Force believes that, though it may be less than perfect, a significant improvement in the services to children and youth could be effected if government authorized service rationalization at a regional level, **on the principle that any given school division should relate to only one office for any particular human service.** The Regional Education offices seem well placed for the responsibility to negotiate these changes with the other human service agencies, such as Health and Social Services. This additional level of rationalization may be expected to complement the efforts already being made by school divisions to develop a Shared Services approach to the hiring of specialized resource personnel.

The single jurisdiction model requires each human service department to offer service to any given school division only through one of its offices or districts. In cases where currently several offices or districts service a school division, the Task Force calls upon the Regional Education office to initiate a process inviting the department and districts or regions in question to rationalize their service through only one of its offices, or districts. So, for example, if a school division's boundaries fall within two or more Health Districts, then the Regional Education office would initiate discussions with the Department of Health and the Health Districts in question to determine which of them will be responsible for all services to children and youth in relation to that school division. The same approach would apply to Social Services, and as far as possible to Justice too. It is worth noting that the Task Force found inconsistency even between the services provided to school divisions by different RCMP Detachments. For example, some Detachments sponsor school-linked youth court workers and others do not.

2.6 ***That the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training be included within the mix of interagency human services.***[71]

The Task Force sees growing potential for the involvement of the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training in the expanded interagency network that will constitute the School^{PLUS} environment. There will, for example, be a role for adult education associated with some of the community school programs, such as day care, pre-kindergarten, early childhood intervention (0-3) and nutrition, as well as programs associated with parenting, addictions, anger management and career explorations. In addition, as Community School high schools increasingly become a reality, there will be enhanced opportunities for adults in retrieval programs, as well as employment skills, workplace technology and career exploration programs. The use of school facilities for recreation events, of course, is another potential for adults. Such programs are already in

[71] Although the Task Force has not proposed separate recommendations relating to their participation, we recognize that other departments, such as Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, will have important contributions to make to the integration of human services for children and youth.

operation in different parts of the province wherever the potential for joint use of facilities, by schools and communities, has been recognized.

The philosophy of Community School outlined earlier, of course, encourages the notion that the school belongs to the whole community, to the adults as well as to children and youth. Furthermore, it may be expected that parents' interest in, and commitment to, the education of their children is likely to be enhanced when adults themselves have developed a strong bond with the school and see it as a place where human potential can be realized.

Therefore, although it is not part of the integrated human services for children and youth that we have emphasized thus far, the Task Force wishes to acknowledge that the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training has a vital role to play in the constellation of services associated with School[PLUS].

[redacted]

We have employed the notion of School[PLUS] as a general concept in our discussion of both Community Schools (1.) and Interagency initiatives (2.). In this section we address the concept explicitly, and directly. In particular we need to explore the deeper implications of this notion from an organizational and administrative perspective. We need, for example, to clarify the extent to which School[PLUS] is a new organizational entity, and the extent to which it has strong links with the school and human service agencies that currently exist.

Before exploring the shape of School[PLUS], however, we need to remind ourselves of the dangers inherent in what amounts to the 'add-on' strategy that has been adopted thus far. By 'add-on' we mean the current approach where school is structured pretty much as it always has been, but continuously adds services and responsibilities. These add-ons threaten to distort and compromise the mission of the school, while at the same time providing only a much less than optimal, not very integrated approach to the delivery of the other human services that are needed for children and youth.

Schools as we know them were never designed to meet the needs of the whole child. As our province moves into a critical juncture of its history, however, and when full cognizance is taken of the diverse needs of children and youth, it becomes clear that a radically new approach must be taken to meeting their needs. School[PLUS] is not, therefore, school as we know it today with more added on; School[PLUS] is, instead, intended to be an altogether new organizational environment for meeting the needs of children and youth.

School[PLUS], once fully developed, will be a matrix organization that *will draw all of its resources from existing governmental and non-governmental agencies, but it will coordinate and integrate those resources in relation to the needs of children and youth.* This kind of articulation is just not possible in the current administrative structure where discrete 'stove pipes' are the conduits for service. Cooperation and collaboration are

possible, of course, but there are limits beyond which only a more fundamental reform can take us.

Figure 3 below illustrates the essential schema of this organization. In the left-hand (vertical) column we have the various governmental and non-governmental agencies; their staff will provide the human resources needed to operate the School^{PLUS} programs. Across the top of the page (horizontally) we have the School^{PLUS} environment – *a new horizon* for the delivery of school and other human services. School^{PLUS} represents a new coordinating function for integrating the resources in the left-hand column. The coordination means that these resources are school-linked. School^{PLUS} is thus the authority, and the administrative capacity, to integrate human services for children and youth so that they are school-linked. One of the services central to School^{PLUS} is the New School itself. Its staff members retain their professional identity and contracts with school divisions, but they will now work within the nexus of a larger human services network.

This structure suggests that every School^{PLUS} program, shown schematically by the letters A-F, as well as New School (public education),[72] *draws upon the resources of one or more of the agencies identified in the left-hand column.* In practical terms this means that the workers will retain their professional identities and contracts with their home departments or agencies, but *their day-to-day task assignments will be determined in collaboration with the School^{PLUS} team.*

Figure 3

Program → / Agency ↓	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOV'T							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
W							
X							
Y							
Z							

[72]Note here, and throughout this document, the term 'public education' refers to all publicly funded schools and school systems. Thus 'Public Education' includes the Catholic and Separate school divisions, and the Division scolaire francophone, as well as school divisions commonly referred to as 'public school divisions'.

Figure 4

Program → / Agency ↓	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
School Divisions							
X							
Y							
Z							

Figure 4 above shows that the responsibility for delivering the New School belongs to Saskatchewan Education and the province's school divisions. We use the term 'New School' to signal the fact that while the mandate for 'school' will remain its responsibility for public education in the broad sense,[73] the school will exist within a larger human services environment (with many other programs possible, indicated by the letters A – F). But in the School^{PLUS} environment these programs, and the whole range of services for children and youth, will be integrated and coordinated in a much stronger way than is now possible. The boundaries between departments and agencies, and the New School itself, will be more permeable than they are now. Staff from the other departments and agencies will be linked to the New School in a coordinated and integrated environment that permits genuine collaboration and team building.

Figure 5 below shows how within School^{PLUS} a program (E) could be delivered primarily by Social Services. Other programs could, of course, be offered by one of the other agencies in the left-hand column (other governmental, third-party, or community-based). It is important to remember, however, that *the responsibility for the coordination of all of these programs and services rests with School^{PLUS}*. The School^{PLUS} area in the figure is, therefore, shaded to indicate that all programs are strongly linked to school. So although New School is not responsible for the delivery of every program – its focus is public education – the School^{PLUS} environment assures that all of the other programs are *strongly linked to school and, in some cases, are based in a common facility ('school-based').*

[73] Including Catholic-Separate and 'public' school divisions, and both elementary and high schools.

Figure 5

Program → / Agency ↓	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
W							
X							
Y							
Z							

In order to accomplish the desired integration of services, School[PLUS] needs to possess a comprehensive coordinating capacity able to create a strongly collaborative culture. As we suggested earlier (see Recommendation 2.2, relating to Cabinet mandate), we see the collaboration as a mandated reform. The Task Force is of the opinion that a purely voluntary approach to the integration of human services, in the name of cooperation, has run its course. There have been important gains, but further progress will only be made on the basis of stronger authorization and an enhanced coordinating capacity.

Our intention, however, is that School[PLUS] coordination, although mandated, will be effected on the basis of collaboration and team building. Certainly there need to be clear lines of accountability, and for the purposes of the school-linked programs, we see the responsibility for the coordination of the programs vested in School[PLUS]. But the integrated services environment itself needs to be one of mutual, professional respect, with the goal of creating a truly collaborative culture.

We recommend some local flexibility in terms of how the coordinating capacity is achieved. In practical terms, it could be achieved by increased administrative time for an in-school administrator; or, it may consist in the appointment of a program director (who may, or may not be an educator); or, it might be achieved by reassigning a RIC Coordinator. We say 'reassign' in the case of the RIC Coordinator, because the framework would be quite different than the RIC itself. Unlike the current Regional Intersectoral Committees (RICs), the School[PLUS] environment is based upon *mandated integration that is school-linked.* In moving to the School[PLUS] environment, a RIC Coordinator would have

new terms of reference; there would be continuity in terms of agencies and people, but otherwise, as they say, it would be a whole new ball game!

As mentioned above, Figure 5 shows a Social Services program (E) delivered within the School^{PLUS} environment. The program (E) might be a pupil absentee follow-up program, where a social worker follows up on absentee children and works with the family involved. The social worker may decide to set up a parent support group for such families, to provide support and assistance for them in relation to a wide range of needs. Obviously this program must have very close links to the staff of New School, but the primary responsibility for running the program will, in this example, belong to Social Services. This example is not meant to imply, however, that absentee follow-up should be the responsibility of Social Services. In some cases absenteeism might be addressed in an interagency manner, with the involvement of multiple agencies, including Health and police resource officers. In such cases the figure representing this involvement would be more complex.

In Figure 6 below, the shaded sections illustrate a program (B) that is being delivered by Social Services, Justice and the New School. There will be many such programs that require the sponsorship of multiple agencies; they will usually include New School and several human service departments (Social Services and Justice). The figures that follow illustrate some of these additional possibilities. It is worth noting that in mounting these programs sometimes arrangements will be made for staff from the other Departments, like Social Services, or Justice, to have an office within the School^{PLUS} facility. In this case the program will be school-based, as well as school-linked.

Figure 6

Program → / Agency ↓	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
School Divisions							
X							
Y							
Z							

Figure 7

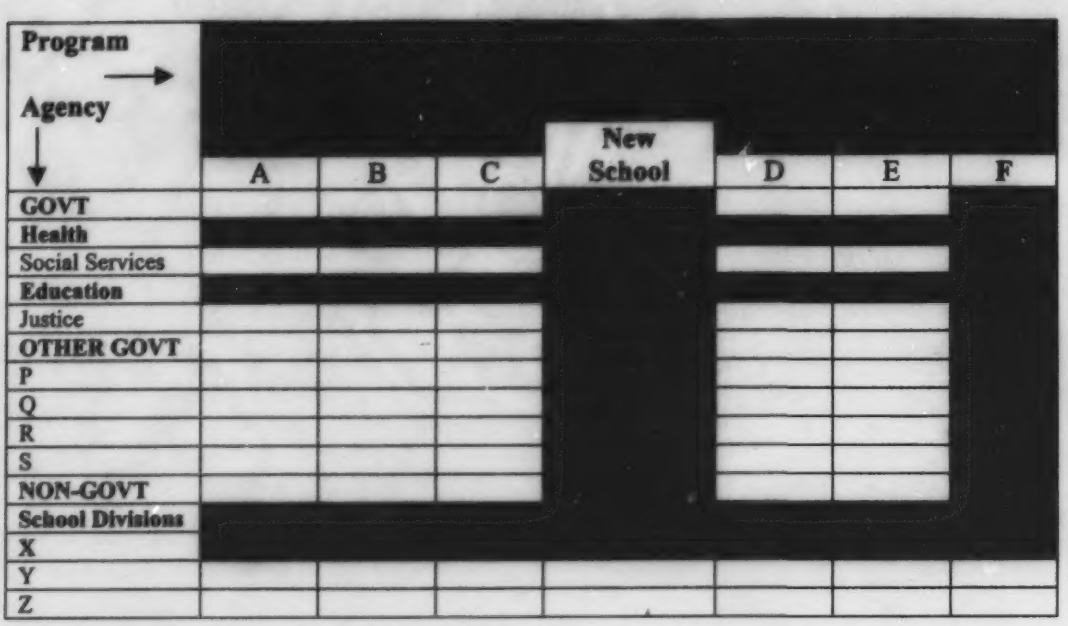


Figure 7 above represents a program (F) being delivered jointly by Health, Education, and a non-government, community-based, agency (identified as 'X'). 'F' might be a program relating to teen pregnancy.

The question will be asked, what is the nature of this environment and how does it differ from what currently exists? The essential difference lies in the fact that the Task Force sees the new environment as an authorized, school-linked environment for all human services that target children and youth. The matrix character of this environment ensures the ongoing professional identity and expertise of the services; it also permits continuity of professional and bargaining unit identity for staff who work within this environment. But the Task Force is of the strong conviction that the current – entirely voluntary, and cooperative – model for service delivery must give way to one *that is authorized*, if real progress is to be made in the integration of services. By *authorized* the Task Force intends that the Government of Saskatchewan endorse the principle that all services for children and youth shall be articulated in a school-linked and school-based manner in a new *School*^{PLUS} environment.

3.1 ***That the Government of Saskatchewan authorize the principle that all services to children and youth in the province shall be delivered in a truly integrated environment that is school-linked and, where possible and feasible, school-based.***

Adoption of this principle does not mean that suddenly all of the other human services begin to move offices and staff into schools! It does, however, mean that in principle, and in practice – increasingly over time – all of the services offered to children and youth will

be coordinated by one agency. This agency will ensure that these services have essential links to schooling and public education.

The Task Force does not have a blueprint for what the agency will look like in each and every case. Indeed, we believe that there is virtue in the precise configuration being developed at the local level. Initially, 'local' will need to mean regional. Upon the adoption of this principle (what we call *the essential School^{PLUS} principle*) we see Regional Education offices beginning to coordinate efforts to create the appropriate School^{PLUS} environment in their Regions.

The reason the configuration needs to be created at local and regional levels, rather than as a uniform template for the whole province, is that the range of needs and services will vary considerably throughout the province.

The point is, however, that *the principle of an integrated human services environment for meeting the needs of children and youth needs to be accepted by all of the government agencies; it needs to be encouraged amongst all non-government agencies; and it needs to be articulated in a manner that is school-linked and school-based.*

The articulation of the services needs to be done at the local level, because the principle of School^{PLUS} will be best applied in different ways, in different areas of the province. In large urban areas, and in particular schools in such areas, there may well be substantial integration of services accomplished even at the local school level. There will always need to be some integration of services at the level of school divisions, and we see a very important role for what are now Regional Education offices in the development and coordination of the essential School^{PLUS} principle in their Regions. In sparsely populated rural areas, for example, it may well make sense for the primary burden for the articulation of School^{PLUS} services to fall on what we now call the Regional Education offices. *School^{PLUS} is, therefore, capable of **multi-layered implementation**, as well as **adaptation to local environments**.*

At this point, however, we are running into words, and their meanings are becoming ambiguous. As we grasp the full significance of School^{PLUS}, we will realize that 'school' is by implication evolving from an entity that is a third party under the Department of Education as defined by *The Education Act*, to a new entity altogether, with a new kind of staffing configuration and a new legal environment. By the same token, what we are calling 'Regional Education offices' will become entities with a much broader organizational identity. In fact the authorized mandate of School^{PLUS}, and the Regional Education offices too, will extend to all of the human services for children and youth in Saskatchewan.

The force of the School^{PLUS} matrix now becomes clear. All of the professional staff and services from which support will be drawn retain professional identity and contracts with their line departments (e.g., Health, or Social Services), or third party entity (e.g., teachers), but the articulation of the services provided by these staff will be effected by the agency we are calling School^{PLUS}. School^{PLUS} will, therefore, ultimately become a new third-party

entity, and its mandate will include both what we now call 'schools' as well as all of the other human service provider staff associated with children and youth.

As in all matrix environments, the staff will carry a bi-valent accountability: their professional contract identity will be maintained with their line department, or third party entity, but their day-to-day job assignments will be coordinated by, and their programs delivered within, the School^{PLUS} environment.

The Task Force sees a need for further exploration of the contractual implications of a matrix environment of this sort. Cabinet endorsement will ensure that the School^{PLUS} staff configuration is authorized. What this authorization means in particular applications needs to be determined. *In some cases it will mean that the department* ***assigns*** *staff members to a particular environment. In other cases the assignment will involve a formal* ***secondment*** *to the School^{PLUS} environment.*

It must also be recognized that as School^{PLUS} evolves in local environments, the actual *task of coordinating human services* may be assigned to staff with different professional identities, from different bargaining units. In some cases, where we are dealing with a school environment, the coordination may be undertaken by the Principal, or the Vice-Principal. In such cases, obviously the in-school administrator would require a much expanded mandate than currently exists. In other instances, however, the coordination might be assigned to a program director or coordinator, who was a social worker or a health care worker.

Similarly, in what we now call a School Division office, or a Regional Education office, the task of coordinating the integrated services may fall to an educator, but it need not.

The implementation of School^{PLUS} clearly carries with it enormous implications for every aspect of public education and human services for children and youth, from funding and legislation, to staffing and liability. It is time now to address these areas with specific recommendations.

3.2 ***That Cabinet instruct senior officials from all of the human service agencies, including Health, Social Services, Justice and Education, to meet and determine appropriate procedures for the coordination of future budget submissions from their departments relating to children and youth, so as to best support the integrated services model represented by School^{PLUS}.***

Further,

3.3 ***That Cabinet instruct its senior officials from the above-mentioned human service departments to consider what sort of administrative arrangements and mechanisms might best support the assignment of staff from any agency to the School^{PLUS} environment.***

The Task Force recognizes that the implementation will entail significant incremental support in terms of resources, both human and financial. The Task Force believes that a smaller portion of the monies identified above for the Interagency Fund shall be used for this purpose. We see the remainder of the fund being used to deliver programs and services.

3.4 ***That the Interagency Fund be used, in part, to support the creation of School^{PLUS}.***

Although it is the Task Force's intention that most of these funds be expended on direct service, we also recognize that targeting some of these monies for the creation of the School^{PLUS} environment would be well advised. It would be our view that the School^{PLUS} environment will ensure a more effective expenditure of the remaining monies.

In what follows the Task Force identifies a necessary progression of considerations relating to staff, liability and legislation. We see the current educational stakeholders as needing to address these issues initially, but we also see the necessity for expanding this conversation and consultation to include the human service departments within government, and eventually all human service provider agencies.

3.5 ***That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore the implications of the differentiated staffing environment entailed by School^{PLUS}. Further, it is proposed that Saskatchewan Education take the lead in calling the first meeting to discuss the most appropriate mechanism and process for addressing these issues and questions.***

School^{PLUS}, and the promotion of school-linked and school-based services, mean that the staff in the school environment will become increasingly differentiated. Some large school divisions already deal with multiple labour unions and, to a lesser extent, multiple professional associations too. With the advent of School^{PLUS} the concept of a very differentiated staff will become the norm, and *this development poses some serious issues for school boards, as well as for school division administrators.* These issues need to be addressed in a straightforward, proactive manner.

We believe in the importance of role differentiation: teachers, nurses, social workers and justice workers all bring their own expertise and commitments to the needs of children and youth. Although flexibility and multi-tasking are all valued work place skills, there are limits beyond which folly sets in, and dysfunction begins to reign. We are very close to this point – if we have not already reached it – in schools today.

As the 'PLUS' in School^{PLUS} gradually evolves, questions will be raised about the possibility of various staffing configurations. An emerging broad-based environment will, for example, involve the coordination of a wide variety of services and staff. Thought needs to be given to the implications of this sort of staffing profile.

There are implications for the management of these services too. We have already noted several possible alternatives: in-school administrators (Principals or Vice-Principals) may

coordinate interagency services to a school; in other instances this task may be assigned to a 'program coordinator' who might be a social worker or a health care worker. The same reasoning applies to school division offices; in some instances the coordinator of interagency services may be an educator, in others it will be a member of one of the other human service professions.

The implications of this sort of staffing configuration for schools and school divisions needs to be examined, including issues such as supervision, job assignment, bargaining and liability from a contractual and a legal viewpoint. The process of addressing issues like these is, of course, the very process that will ultimately define what kind of organizational and legal entity the School^{PLUS} environment will become.

3.6 ***That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore the organizational and legal implications of creating the integrated services environment suggested by School^{PLUS}, including governance, supervision, liability and legislation.***

If the needs of children are the focus of an integrated services environment, and if we are intent on addressing the needs of the whole child, then the possibility must be faced that a new organizational entity may well be in the making. Questions and issues relating to governance and legislation will need to be discussed and direction established for their resolution. The sorts of questions that will arise include: Is the School^{PLUS} environment still a 'school' as defined by *The Education Act*? Are the other human services linked to the school (and at times based in the school), covered entirely by legislation, policy and protocols that relate to their home departments, or will the interface between these agencies, and the current school system, call for additional policy, protocols and legislation?

What about governance? Should Boards of Education remain more or less intact, located within this larger service environment? If so, *what sort of governance arrangements are indicated for the larger service environment?* Alternatively, would the larger School^{PLUS} environment be better served by expanding the mandate of the elected Boards to encompass responsibility for both education and human services for children and youth?

Figure 8 poses the issues of governance and the possible necessity of legislation. Although this report does not provide a detailed action plan associated with the implementation of School^{PLUS}, we envisage fundamental changes for both schools and the human services. Whether these changes can be effected in one decisive administrative and legislative action, or whether they will evolve over a period of time, is impossible for us to tell. What is perfectly clear, however, is that the integration must be authorized, that is, endorsed by Cabinet. It is difficult for us to see how this authorization would not have implications for legislation.

Figure 8

	Governance and Legislation?						
Program → **Agency ↓**							
	A	B	C	New School	D	E	F
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
W							
X							
Y							
Z							

Figure 8 prompts the following questions: What sort of governance does the School[PLUS] require? If school boards as currently structured are responsible for the 'public education' program, who, or what sort of body, should govern the interagency functions and programs? Should the mandate of school boards be expanded? Should they exist within a larger governance framework? Or, should an entirely new governing body be created? These are rather dramatic questions, but the Task Force believes that we need to ask them. And we need to think through the various alternatives in light of what will be best for children and youth.

Doubtless much of the legislative and policy environment that currently exists will remain intact, especially as it relates to service protocols, expertise and professional contracts. The assignment of staff to an integrated environment, however, and the management of that environment will likely entail changes that relate to legislation and governance. While the Task Force recommends that role differentiation of professional staff in School[PLUS] be maintained, we are recommending a new environment to ensure that boundaries between the human services in the future are more permeable, and services better coordinated. It is difficult to imagine these changes being seriously considered without impact on legislation and governance.

3.7 ***That a broad-based interagency group, including the Human Services Integration Forum (HSIF), and representatives from SSTA, STF and LEADS be convened to***

consider the creation of an authorized, truly integrated human services environment that is articulated with public education and is focused on the needs of children and youth (earlier, we called this environment the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network – SEAHSN).

The Task Force is cognizant of the good work currently being done by the Regional Intersectoral Committees, as well as the important initiatives that school divisions have undertaken themselves (to connect with the other service agencies and, in some cases, hiring other professional workers, like social workers). It also recognizes the commitment of all of the human service agencies and third-party entities responsible for public education to create a better coordinated service environment that is focused on the needs of children and youth.

At the same time the Task Force is firmly convinced that further progress will not be achieved, or will make only minimal gains, unless two fundamental changes are made:

A: *that the integrated environment is authorized by Cabinet* (see recommendation 3.1); and

B: *that a plan is developed by senior officials from government and public education to implement a truly integrated environment.*

We have already made recommendations that senior officials in the human service government agencies meet to coordinate planning around various aspects of an integrated environment (3.2 and 3.3); we have also urged representatives from the SSTA, the STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education to meet and discuss implications of the School^{PLUS} environment (3.5 and 3.6). In 3.7 we recommend the creation of a steering committee with representation from both of these groups of agencies, government and public education, to establish an action plan that:

- Creates a new environment for delivering public education and human services for children and youth;
- Focuses on the needs of children and youth;
- Respects the professionalism of all human service providers;
- Assures the distinctive integrity of public education (the New School) and the other human service agencies; and
- Provides an authorized framework within which human services for children and youth are articulated with public education.

Figure 9, which schematically includes the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN), represents the kind of coordinating structure envisaged by this recommendation. The details of how this structure can be put into place, and what it would look like – in the short-term, as well as ultimately – need to be worked out. As we have already noted, the implications for staffing and legislation also need to be considered.

The Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network presents a radical reform that will have important implications for schools and the human services. The goal of this reform is to position the school and human services in the best possible way to meet the emerging needs of children and youth.

Figure 9

	Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network						
Program → **Agency ↓**				**New School**			
	A	**B**	**C**		**D**	**E**	**F**
GOVT							
Health							
Social Services							
Education							
Justice							
OTHER GOVT							
P							
Q							
R							
S							
NON-GOVT							
W							
X							
Y							
Z							

3.8 ***That the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation give consideration to creating a Special Subject Council for the purpose of addressing issues pertaining to "Community Schools/School[PLUS]."***

The Special Subject Councils – now some 30 in total - have provided well recognized venues for considering a wide variety of special subjects. The Task Force believes that the implementation of a Council to address Community Schools and School[PLUS] would greatly enhance the change initiative being proposed in this report.

[redacted]

In many ways the impact of the changing role of the school becomes most focused upon, and most concentrated in, the classroom. Here the teacher experiences the pressures of

conflicting demands and growing expectations. Teachers are also the 'first call' when it comes to the needs of children and youth. The Task Force has come to understand this phenomenon as the 'intensification' of the role of the teacher. During our Phase I consultations the problem was recognized and commented upon frequently by many groups and observers.

In the *Interim Report*, for example, we noted the view of school board members that,

> *Teachers' primary responsibilities are to attend to the educational needs of students. Social workers, health and justice workers should be employed to attend to other-than-schooling needs.* (p. 29)

And we noted the view of parents that,

> *Teachers have difficulty fulfilling their role as academic instructors because, in many circumstances, classroom situations force them to take on the role of social worker, health-care worker, and psychologist.* (p. 26)

Along a similar vein we heard an educational administrator remark,

> *We are losing a very precious thing and that is that teachers are not being allowed to teach because they are dealing with social, health, and justice issues of children.* (p. 16)

Teachers themselves commented that,

> *They lack time during the day to give students the attention they need. This is especially true in classrooms where there are many students with special needs.* (p. 32)

And that,

> *Much classroom time is spent on meeting the basic needs of students (making sure they are fed and nurtured) and, thus, teachers have less time to spend on the more academic aspects of schooling.* (p. 32)

Further, amongst the themes we derived from our consultation records we recorded the view that,

> *There are more special needs students with emotional and behavioral problems. Excess pressure is placed on teachers to cope with such a wide variety of children in the classroom. Therefore, teachers must modify programs for the varying grade levels, plus deal with the behavioral and emotional problems the kids are bringing to school.* As a result, teachers have become social workers, counselors, parents, and child psychologists. (p. 34, emphasis added)

And,

> *In any given day, a teacher is a mentor, guide, parent, friend, surrogate parent, counselor, as well as being expected to deliver a curriculum of studies.* (p. 37)

There was also evidence that the *demands on teachers are becoming excessive*, and beginning to take their toll.

> *Too many students in classes, mainstreaming of special needs children without adequate support, unremitting criticism and unrealistic expectations from the community, all of these factors (and many others too) have reduced the emotional resources of teachers.* (p. 42)

Some of the opinion we gleaned began to point to *possible solutions*. In one of the theme reports, for example, it was noted that,

> *An integrated-services approach should relieve some of the pressures on teachers who are now often taking on the role of parent, educator, health-care worker, social worker and even justice worker. Children and youth will benefit if other workers take on these roles* and teachers are again allowed to be educators. (p. 19, emphasis added)

And an *educational administrator* stressed that,

> *We need a framework.* If each person knew what their role and responsibility was, *and if each person fulfilled his role and responsibility, you would not be asking these questions.* (p. 19, emphasis added)

On the basis of these comments, and many others repeated to us over and over again throughout the province, the Task Force finds the notion inescapable that the role of the teacher must be clarified if public education is to fulfill the mission and expectations we as a society have created for it.

Earlier, in 2, Interagency, and 3, The School^{PLUS} Environment, we attempted to outline our concept for creating an expanded interagency environment for schools and the human services. We do so in the belief that only by creating this kind of support for children and youth, linked to schools and often based within the school, can the school itself focus upon the task of public education. We believe that it is vital within this expanded environment for teachers to attend to teaching and learning. There are no short-cuts in this process. If we want teachers to do much more, then inevitably there will be less teaching and learning, and there is evidence to suggest that has already begun to happen.

The Task force believes that this situation can be remedied, not by trying to wind the clock back to a nostalgic "golden age" (which was almost certainly much less golden than we have painted it!), but by moving forward into the next stage of service delivery. In particular we see the necessity for 'school' to be located within a wider array of

professional and community services. Within this environment, however, we see the teacher's paramount role as that of educator. In this spirit the Task Force recommends,

4.1 ***That within the expanded human services environment created by School^{PLUS}, the paramount role of the teacher should be that of educator.***

The Task Force does recognize that the expanded environment of the school, and the changing needs of children and youth, will have implications for teachers.[74] We see their role, however, as fundamentally one that focuses on instruction, learning and the goals of the curriculum. This focus does not mean that teachers are intended to ignore the other needs of children and youth, but it does mean that these needs are not the primary responsibility of the classroom teacher, particularly in their most extreme manifestations.

Teachers will have a referral function, and they will also need to confer with other professionals, parents and community service personnel, but the focus of their own efforts should be to promote learning.

Further, the Task Force recommends,

4.2 ***That the education partners, especially the STF and the pre-service colleges of education, endeavor to promote the understandings and skills implicit in School^{PLUS} and provide appropriate pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities.***[75]

Another matter the Task Force is most concerned about is the phenomenon of teacher-funded school supplies. Many teachers routinely purchase school supplies for their classrooms and pupils. Although we recognize that it is customary for employees to spend some personal funds on work-related items, it is unfair to expect teachers to subsidize the very tight school materials and supplies budgets they do in the current environment. This is clearly not part of the teacher's role!

Moreover, the Task Force does not believe that tax deduction constitutes either an adequate or an appropriate remedy to this problem. Tax deduction simply fails to recompense teachers properly in relation to these costs. We believe it is time that a proper administrative approach is taken to the matter, one in which a significant incremental fund is created that recognizes some costs associated with the purchase of school supplies by teachers.

Initially, we believe that the amount of $300 per teacher, per annum, represents a minimal commitment to this concept.

Therefore, the Task Force recommends:

---

[74]Readers are encouraged to consult APPENDIX 2, School^{PLUS} and the Teacher, for a discussion of the implications of School^{PLUS} for the role of the teacher.
[75]See APPENDIX 2, School^{PLUS} and the Teacher.

4.3 ***That costs associated with the purchase of school supplies by teachers, up to $300 per teacher/per annum, be recognized in the Foundation Operating Grant; and, that Boards of Education create individual teacher accounts in this amount and authorize teachers to claim such expenses as they may incur by submitting the appropriate receipts.***

[$300 x 12,000 teachers = $3.6 M in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years]

[redacted]

There can be little doubt about the fact that the role of in-school administrators is evolving. School[PLUS] contains further implications for expansion and change. The concept of an expanded human service environment calls for management, or at the very least liaison on the part of in-school administrators. In some larger schools the coordination of the interagency human services will be undertaken by a Program Director, who may or may not be a teacher, but in many other schools, and certainly in smaller ones, this task will be assumed by an in-school administrator, likely the Principal.

In other words, implicit within the support framework that will help teachers focus on the task of public education *is a changed and expanded role for in-school administrators.* The new role is nothing less than coordinating the full range of human services available to children and youth. These services will be delivered by other human service professionals, parents, and community agencies. This coordination calls for an understanding of a wide range of professional and community-based services, power-sharing, negotiation and mediation skills, sophisticated interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to multi-task and create a collaborative team-work environment.[76]

The coordination and management of an integrated human service centre calls for an incremental addition to current administrative capacity. The system is currently relatively uncoordinated. If change is to be effected it will require time and effort: neither are appropriately identified at present. *The Task Force is adamant that it cannot be assumed that the new task can simply be added to the already overburdened role of the Principal.* School Principals were never intended to be coordinators of interagency services. School[PLUS] administration calls for a new, incremental growth in administrative capacity, one that embraces all of the human services. The creation of this capacity will cost money, but it will be an expenditure that will multiply the potential within human services many-fold.

In light of these reflections the Task Force recommends:

---

[76]For further development and discussion of the implications for in-school administrators, see APPENDIX 3, School[PLUS] and the In-School Administrator.

5.1 ***That the Saskatchewan educational community recognize the expanded role for in-school administrators implicit within the School^{PLUS} environment; and,***

5.2 ***That in order to meet the growing need for integrated services coordination, additional funding be provided to school divisions to allow them to increase the administrative capacity of their schools; and,***

[$5 M – 2001-2002, and $8 M for each of the following three years]

5.3 ***That a broad-based, ad hoc committee of representatives from the Saskatchewan education community, including at least two in-school administrators, consider the implications for contract, job description, remuneration and accountability that are implicit within the notion of a truly integrated, school-linked and school-based approach to the human services; and,***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years]

5.4 ***That the committee be expanded over time to include representation from all of the human service agencies.***

Pre-service Colleges of Education

The Task Force is conscious of the fact that the implementation of its recommendations carries significant implications for pre-service teacher education and graduate studies in Education. Generally speaking the teacher of tomorrow needs to be much more aware of the wide range of professional human services than is typically covered in undergraduate teacher education programs. There is need for enhanced awareness of the principles of community development, an appreciation for the role of parents as active participants in their children's education, and the contribution to school that can be made by non-governmental, community-based organizations. The human service administrator, both in-School^{PLUS} and within central offices, will need to have considerable familiarity with a wide range of human services; will need to value collaboration, and be able to promote team-work; will need to be willing to share power, negotiate and mediate; and will need to be able to foster a rich and sensitive environment of human relationships.

In light of these considerations, the Task Force recommends:

6.1 ***That the two colleges of education in the province, at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, as well as the Aboriginal teacher education programs, NORTEP, SUNTEP, ITEP and the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Department of Indian Education, carefully consider the implications of the integrated human services environment contained within School^{PLUS}, and, that they determine how their undergraduate and graduate***

programs might best be changed and adapted to support this new environment; and in particular,

6.2 ***That the colleges and Aboriginal teacher education programs consider the role of the teacher and the role of the in-school administrator implied by School^{PLUS} and determine how the knowledge, understanding and skills requisite for an integrated human services environment might be promoted.***

Partnership with Students

The Task Force was most impressed by its consultations with students throughout the province – in the north, in rural and urban areas, students from small high schools and those in large collegiate institutes – all spoke with maturity and insight. We have also gathered the impression that as educators we tend not to be including these voices as effectively as we should in the creation of policy, and in decision-making. Often the student voice is limited to the existence of an SRC of some kind, the organization of dances and athletic events, and the production of a yearbook. While these and other such activities are valuable, there is greater potential to be tapped.[77]

Therefore, we urge:

7.1 ***That the participation and involvement of students become a cornerstone of both school policy and its application; and further,***

7.2 ***That a variety of opportunities and venues be created in high school and middle years settings for soliciting the student voice, including conducting surveys and creating focus groups, and that the canvassing of such opinion be regarded as a vital component of needs assessment and high school reform; and further,***

7.3 ***That all Saskatchewan high schools embrace a school policy assessment cycle that includes canvassing student opinion on at least an annual basis, and reflection by staff on the feedback, with a view to modifying school policy and practice.***

The Task Force sees the importance of these opportunities for student involvement and participation not only in terms of their impact on the quality of school programs and environment, but also, for their contribution to student character formation and development. For this reason we see a strong link between these recommendations and 20, Student Attitudes and Behavior (p. 103).

---

[77] "Students believe they need to be more involved in educational decision making. They would like to be consulted regarding curricular choices, scheduling of classes, and governance of schools." "We're expected to be young adults, but we are not given enough freedom and responsibility" (A Student). (*Interim Report*, p. 20)

Partnership with Parents

Although there are countless examples of happy and positive relations between schools (and teachers) and parents in the province, the Task Force has also become aware that there is a problematic element in relation to parents and schools. On the one hand, parent organizations offer help to schools,[78] but on the other hand, teachers tend to see parents as less supportive of teachers and schools than they were in the past,[79] and sometimes they see them as contributory to the problems children experience today.[80] The way *teacher professionalism* has been understood may have exacerbated the problem. Teacher organizations and, perhaps, colleges of education too, have sometimes defined teacher professionalism in a way that tends to exclude parents (along the lines that parents do not expect to have input during surgical procedures involving their children, so why in the classroom?).

Building upon the recommendations of several other reports, however, the Task Force sees necessity and positive potential for parental involvement in children's education.[81] Parents and primary caregivers have a vital interest in children, and this interest needs to be nurtured and cultivated. Surgery, and similar metaphors, are not helpful for illuminating the teaching task and certainly do nothing to foster positive relationships between parents and teachers. No one is talking about parents moving in and out of classrooms at will, but a positive, active participant role for parents can be fostered by schools in the recognition that the education of children is a shared responsibility. Rather than competing with teacher professionalism, the shared responsibility approach provides a supportive context in which the teacher's role and expertise can flourish.

A variety of organizations and groups exist who can provide help and support in the effort to involve parents as active participants in the education of their children. The Saskatchewan Association of School Councils (SASC), local parent-teacher associations, parent councils and the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), all have a vitally important contribution to make in this regard.

By the same token, pre-service teacher education colleges and professional teacher organizations both need to promote an understanding of teacher professionalism that does not exclude parents or other professionals. Teachers also need professional development opportunities that foster the interpersonal, negotiating and mediation skills that are essential

---

[78] Task Force submission, Saskatchewan Association of School Councils, May 2000.

[79] "Parents are more demanding and questioning but less supportive of teachers and schools" (*Interim Report*, p. 32).

[80] "Teachers believe that dysfunctional families, poverty, the lack of support from extended family members, parents who lack parenting skills, and a society that fails to take responsibility for caring for, disciplining, and guiding youth have contributed to the problems children and youth are experiencing. This situation has been exacerbated in rural communities because of the crisis in farming and in northern communities because of high unemployment" (*Interim Report*, p. 31).

[81] In particular, we would draw attention to, *Extending the Learning Community, Involving Parents and Families in Schools*, the SSTA Research Centre, 1994; this document contains a wealth of practical suggestions for effecting a positive parent-teacher relationship. We also note: Brief to the Minister in regard to *Involving Parents and Community in Schools*, Saskatchewan Association of School Councils, November 1997; and *Involving Parents and Community in Schools*, a Public Discussion Paper, Hon. Pat Atkinson, Minister of Education, August 1997.

for facilitating the teacher-parent dialogue. Most especially, teachers need to know that they enjoy the support of their Boards as well as their in-school and central office administrators as they pursue this trust-building and information-sharing exercise. We recognize that on occasion parents can be demanding, but we believe that in the long run a mutually supportive culture is more likely to be fostered where a genuine effort is made by the school to involve parents meaningfully in the child's education.

Parent input into children's education is only partially facilitated by current governance structures. Local and divisional boards represent the electors, and they tend to focus on administrative issues pertaining to schools and school divisions. Only rarely do boards discuss the educational program of an individual child. Parents, on the other hand, have a vital interest in the education of their individual child(ren). School administrators and school division officials are well advised, therefore, to promote the activities of the various kinds of parent-teacher organizations and school councils that exist in the province, as well as promoting explanatory and consultative individual teacher-parent meetings. In particular, it is vital that, in addition to parent involvement in fund-raising and issues of school safety, schools promote discussion of their educational plans, as well as offering explanations of their special educational programs, resources and strategies.

The Task Force, therefore, makes the following recommendations:

8.1 ***That the role of parents as active participants in the education of their children be affirmed and promoted by the Saskatchewan education community; and further,***

8.2 ***That the STF, and the pre-service colleges of education, promote a concept of teacher professionalism that includes parents, and other professional and community resources, as important partners for schools and teachers; and,***

8.3 ***That LEADS and the pre-service colleges of education promote a concept of school administration that recognizes the value of parents and other professional and community resources for the school, and that the values and skills of power sharing, negotiation and mediation be supported and nurtured.***

8.4 ***That efforts be made, and resources allocated, to support the partnership with parents through enhanced coordination between the school and the community (see 5, Role of In-School Administrators, above), and through the provision of professional-development opportunities, designed to equip parents for their role in supporting the learning opportunities of their children.***

[redacted]

In this section we trace a wide array of programs that the Task Force envisions within the integrated services environment of School^{PLUS}. Most of these programs already exist in one form or another, so our recommendations represent an attempt to address issues and concerns that

were raised during our consultation process, as well as suggestions about how some of the solutions can be realized within the School[PLUS] environment.

Pre-Kindergarten

The *Interim Report* addressed needs relating to both early intervention and pre-kindergarten programs.[82] There has been considerable interest in, and support for, this section of the report. In the intervening time the federal government has announced the creation of a major Early Childhood fund in the amount of $2.2 B over five years. The Province of Saskatchewan expects to derive $72 M over five years from this fund.[83] Certainly the fund must be seen as a welcome contribution to a vitally important area of public policy and social development.

Recent advances in brain research have highlighted the urgency of addressing the early needs of children, from 0-3, and ensuring that they are afforded rich learning environments. Without such environments it is now evident that vital phases of cognitive development can be seriously affected, and future learning significantly compromised.[84] Undoubtedly the federal fund will enhance program offerings for this age range, as well as pre-Kindergarten programs for children aged 3-5.

Currently there is no general system of pre-Kindergarten programs in the province.[85] The services for children from 0-5 outside of the home are met by a wide variety of providers, including home-based daycares, private daycare centres, cooperatively operated daycares, community agencies (e.g., Early Learning Centre in Regina), and pre-Kindergarten programs associated with Community Schools. Recognizing that these young children represent our most precious, and surely the most promising of our resources, the Task Force believes that we will want to ensure that the very best care possible, of every kind, is afforded by society.

The Task Force recognizes, of course, that its mandate has a school focus which does not extend in principle either to post-school adults or pre-school children. Because pre-school children are soon to become pupils, however, the Task Force feels that their needs could not be ignored: their readiness for learning is a matter of vital interest for schools. We also heard anecdotal evidence from Community Schools that their pre-Kindergarten programs had a very positive impact on children's readiness to benefit from the school learning environment.

---

[82] See *Interim Report,* Section 3, Part 2, Early Intervention (pp. 62-3), Recommendation 4 (p. 63); and Section 3, Summary: Recommendations, Recommendation 4 (p. 84).

[83] The province anticipates receiving this funding in the following amounts, beginning in 2000-2001, Year 1 of the program, and concluding in 2004-2005, Year 5 of the program: 10 M; 13.5 M; 16 M; 16 M; 16 M.

[84] See especially, Margaret McCain and J. Fraser Mustard, Co-Chairs, *Reversing the Real Brain Drain, Early Years Study, Final Report*, April 1999.

[85] Our understanding of this point and many others, was considerably enhanced by an invited expert presentation to the Task Force by Drs. Caroline Krentz and Kathryn McNaughton, both of the Early Childhood Education Subject Area in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina (December 1999).

Generally, however, our impression is that the demand for pre-Kindergarten programs exceeds the spaces available, and thus that considerable benefit could derive from an expansion of these programs. As in other areas of human service delivery, however, we noted the potential benefit of greater integration between human service agencies. There was real evidence that economies, greater continuity and more effective service would result from increased cooperation between human service agencies. We found evidence of dysfunction, for example, related to the strict separation between services for children aged 0-3, usually the responsibility of the Department of Health, and services for children older than 3, in pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs, which are the responsibility of Education. It is vital that in rural areas especially, arrangements be made between the two service providers to ensure continuity of service for pre-kindergarten children (ages 0-5).

We were also impressed by the need for expanded services for both early years and pre-Kindergarten-aged children. Obviously there is need to target these services to core urban areas, but we also recognized differentials in service available to rural children as compared to their urban counterparts. We heard suggestions relating to the creation of mobile 'early learning' buses, for example, that could cover a given rural region on a weekly cycle, spending half-days in particular locations where they could be accessed by designated families who were recognized for the program.

Finally, we were impressed by the ways in which pre-Kindergarten programs can be linked with adult education opportunities. Prenatal, parenting, nutrition and child enrichment courses and programs all have promise to support parents and other care providers, as well as early childhood and pre-Kindergarten-aged children. Once again, however, these kinds of multi-targeted programs are most likely to flourish where the boundaries between human service agencies are most permeable, and where the high levels of cooperation are authorized and fostered.

9.1 ***That a policy review be undertaken to assess how optimal health and learning services and opportunities for children aged 0-5 might be assured for all children; and,***

[$300,000 in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years, identified for Education in our Budget Estimates, APPENDIX 1, but could be jointly funded with Health and Social Services]

9.2 ***That the number of places in pre-Kindergarten programs in the Community Schools be significantly expanded.***

[$2 M in 2001 to 2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years, to increase pre-Kindergarten program places]

Although the Task Force is hesitant to specify the magnitude of this expansion, an increase of 25-50 % would appear to be indicated.

9.3 ***That the needs of children aged minus-9 months to 5 be included in an authorized framework for human services and public education (see Recommendation 3.7), so as to ensure that optimal integration of all services for these children is achieved.***

9.4 ***That the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST) endeavor to develop adult education programs for parents and other care givers in tandem with early childhood and pre-Kindergarten programs.***

We have already mentioned areas that demonstrate potential for this sort of articulation, including: parenting, prenatal, nutrition and family health and education programs. Although some of these programs currently are the responsibility of other human service providers, most notably Health, there seems real potential for adult education programs designed and delivered by the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training. There is, for example, potential for cross-over between the teaching of basic skills (like literacy and numeracy) and parenting, nutrition and child enrichment programs; the latter can be the context for the former.

[redacted]

Concern about children not in school – called 'hidden youth' – was highlighted for attention in the *Interim Report*.[86] The consultations conducted in Phase 2 of the work of the Task Force, subsequent to the publication of the *Interim Report*, have only served to reinforce our perceptions of this issue and the importance of our recommendations. There are really three aspects of this issue which call for attention:

- The phenomenon itself: the problems of addressing the social pathology that underlies its existence; and the recovery of the children whose lives are being jeopardized;
- The issue of absenteeism follow-up in schools; and
- The problem of our inability to track children, especially between public school systems and Indian Band-operated schools.

The phenomenon itself is highly disturbing from many points of view.[87] One commentator has described the conditions underlying the phenomenon in terms of a 'socially toxic environment'.[88] The social toxicity includes the familiar at-risk factors: poverty, nutrition, abuse, violence and dangerous and damaging lifestyles. As troubling as the phenomenon is, however, the Task Force is equally disturbed by the apparent lack of awareness relating to the problem in our province. Although the magnitude of the phenomenon is difficult to gauge with any degree of precision – and that in itself is part of the problem! – the numbers repeated to the Task Force on numerous occasions represent cause for great concern. To give only a few examples, we were told that there were likely 500-plus youths in Prince

[86]See pages 66-8, in the *Interim Report*, and Recommendations 6.1 to 6.3 (p. 68). The term 'hidden youth' itself is taken from, *Regina's Hidden Youth: Final Report*, coordinated by Dennis Schaefer, for the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, July 1999.
[87]It has been well documented and described for Regina in *Regina's Hidden Youth: Final Report*, 1999.
[88]J. Garbarino, *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment*, Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Albert, 100-200 in North Battleford, and upwards of 1000 in Saskatoon. No modern society can tolerate a phenomenon of this kind, and in this magnitude, with equanimity.

The issue of absentee follow-up is a familiar one, exacerbated by lack of funding and much-less-than-perfect integration between human service agencies. Community Schools have a better ability to follow up on absenteeism, and school systems that have hired their own social workers have also developed some capacity to address the issue. By and large, however, the extent of the problem calls for intervention on a more massive scale, and in a more determined manner.

The Task Force also noted conflicts of mandate between agencies, and quite stark differences of practice within the same agency in different jurisdictional areas. For the most part we heard that Social Services did not consider absenteeism to be part of its mandate: 'It's an education issue.' Some police resource officers appeared to be quite upset by what they perceived to be an avoidance ('off-loading') tactic. In other areas, however, we noted that school officials found their local Social Services office to be quite accommodating, and willing to follow up with families where children were reported to be absent for prolonged periods of time. Even where the support of Social Services was not conspicuous, however, we found school officials to be quite sympathetic to the problems faced by social workers, the size of their caseloads and their shortage of staff.

As to the tracking issue, a meeting with Regional education officials during Phase 2 of our consultations confirmed their confidence that the problem could be solved, and their willingness to tackle the issue immediately.[89] The problem with tracking to date has been exacerbated by the Public School–Band School jurisdictional issue. Since a solution is in the best interests of all students, however, and both school systems, the Regional Directors have determined that it should be tackled on a Region-by-Region basis through consultations between Regional Office officials and Band School officials (within a given Region). Presumably once the pilot project (in Region No. 4) is able to develop a workable system, it can be extended to all Regions within the province. The effort to extend and maintain the system will require resources, however, and these need to be recognized, presumably on a cost-share basis.

Clearly, if the hidden youth issue is to be addressed, it will require a multi-faceted interagency approach. All aspects of the problem need to be confronted, including the underlying issues of community development and the human 'fallout' of a globalized economy that has placed an inordinately high priority on corporate cost-efficiency at the expense of human and social costs.

---

[89]The meeting with representatives from the Regional Education offices in the province was held in Regina on October 12, 2000. Subsequent to this meeting, a pilot project to address the tracking issue was begun in Region No. 4, and is making good progress (as reported by the Regional Director, Lawrence Chomos).

10.1 ***That a determined and well funded intervention strategy be developed by the province to address the situation of Hidden Youth.***

[In 2001-2002: Education - $1 M, and Social Services – 225,000; and for each of the following 3 years: Education - $2 M, and Social Services – $1 M]

We urge that such a strategy:

- Involves all governmental human service agencies, school officials, tribal councils, non-governmental service agencies and community resources;
- Is implemented on a Regional basis;
- Is well funded;
- Is culturally sensitive;[90]
- Is based upon client need;
- Is designed through consultation with clients (especially for youth);
- Promotes the employment of youth outreach workers, especially those attached to schools;
- Recognizes the contributions that can be made by a wide range of services and agencies, with a view to providing services such as: community recreation centers; safe houses; personal counseling and mentoring; and a diversity of 'alternate' school environments, at both the elementary and secondary levels;
- Addresses the barriers that are created by needs relating to transportation and child-care, as well as the assessment of fees for discretionary school activities (school trips and other off-campus activities, e.g., ticket costs).

The allocation of a fund in the region of $5-7 M would certainly not be excessive for an initiative of this kind.

10.2 ***That an ad hoc committee be struck with representation of officials from Education and Social Services, as well as LEADS (or local school division official), the STF (including at least one classroom teacher) as well as a practicing social worker and a representative from a police resource officer program, to address the issue of responsibility for absenteeism follow-up; that this committee be charged with responsibility to develop a protocol for handling the issue of absenteeism so as to clarify as much as possible the various agency roles and responsibilities; and that this protocol be widely advertised and promoted in Social Services and Education, and in all school divisions.***

[$300,000]

10.3 ***That the current efforts in Region No. 4 to develop a pupil tracking system articulated between the school divisions in the Region and schools operated by Indian Bands, with the assistance of the tribal council, be promoted and supported;***

---

[90]It must be noted that a disproportionately high percentage of hidden youth are of Aboriginal ancestry, see, *Regina's Hidden Youth*, p. 22.

that upon successful conclusion of this pilot project, this model be extended to the entire province; and that the Regional Education offices take the lead in promoting and supporting this initiative; and that where incremental costs to support this initiative are indicated, they be fully recognized on a developmental, and ongoing basis.

[$50,000 in 2001-2002 and $100,000 for each of the next 3 years]

11. Court Orders and School Attendance

One of the current practices that illustrates the expanded role of the school is the phenomenon of young offenders *whose sentencing order includes school attendance*. In such instances, which are now not uncommon, the traditional custodial responsibility of the school has taken on added meaning. Although the practice is certainly motivated by a rehabilitative intent, real concerns exist about whether the development of supporting policies, protocols and lines of communication has been sufficient to ensure wisdom and public safety.

Specifically, courts have not always ensured that appropriate follow-up has occurred in relation to sentences where school attendance is part of the court order.

The Task Force is aware of concerns about privileged information and privacy rights; it also appreciates the rehabilitative intent of "sentencing-to-school" practices. The Task Force has, however, been assured that current legislation permits youth workers to share vital information relating to the convictions and sentences of young offenders with appropriate school officials where the sentence includes school attendance.[91] The requirements of public safety dictate that every effort must be made to translate this legal permission into an assured practice.

It should also be noted that the Task Force found considerable inconsistency of practice regarding follow up and the willingness to share information with school officials in different parts of the province. We also noted apparent confusion and uncertainty on the part of school officials, as well as youth workers, in relation to these issues.

In view of these considerations the Task Force recommends:

11.1 ***That where sentences under the provisions of* The Young Offenders Act *include school attendance, the Justice system ensure that there is follow up with the sentenced individuals and that appropriate background information is***

[91] Our understanding is that *The Young Offenders Act* (Canada) was amended in December 1995; the province responded with an Order-in-Council which expanded the classes of person with whom identifying information about a young offender could be shared. Unfortunately, we have heard from in-school administrators that too frequently school officials are still not receiving this information either from the courts or probation officers.

communicated to school division officials with regard to the conviction(s) and the sentence.

The Task Force believes that where court orders involve school attendance, it is the obligation of the court and the Justice system to ensure that the appropriate information is conveyed to school officials.

11.2 ***That when so informed by the Justice system, school officials exercise due diligence in the communication of all relevant information regarding such sentences to in-school administrators and teachers; and,***

Obviously it is incumbent upon in-school administrators and teachers to handle sensitive information in a confidential and judicious manner, without prejudice to the academic and personal potential of the student. It may be that professional development opportunities for teachers need to be created in relation to such matters, but the alternative – to keep school officials in ignorance – is not acceptable. If the appropriate information cannot be shared with schools, then school attendance should not be part of the court order. It may be, however, that more, alternative therapeutic school environments need to be created.

11.3 ***That a broad-based committee be struck to examine the issue of court orders and school attendance, with a view to clarifying the policies, protocols and communications responsibilities around this issue; and, that the results of its deliberation be published widely.***

[redacted]

There are a variety of residential settings throughout the province where troubled youths are provided with educational opportunities. In some of these settings, especially where secure custody is involved, the education being provided is the responsibility of Social Services rather than as part of the public education system, through a school division. The Task Force heard the view expressed that responsibility for these educational opportunities should be transferred to school divisions. Our understanding, however, is that opinion on this issue is divided. In any case, we are firmly convinced that the responsibility for these educational opportunities will benefit immensely from the School^{PLUS} environment.

When School^{PLUS} is fully implemented, the integrated human service environment will ensure close collaboration between Social Services and Education. In this environment it may continue to be the case that primary responsibility for the educational opportunities in some of the institutions designed to help troubled youth remains with Social Services, but with School^{PLUS}, under the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, a truly collaborative approach to this education will be ensured. We are convinced, furthermore, that this environment will more effectively permit student transfer between systems, whatever agency they are sponsored by, and also, will more likely promote the goal of rehabilitation.

For this reason, rather than encouraging a transfer of responsibility for education in these institutional settings from Social Services to Education, the Task Force prefers to encourage the adoption of a School^{PLUS} environment. In this environment the support of Education and the other Human Services will be available for all youth. One of the implications of this approach is that eventually the primary responsibility for instruction will be undertaken by teachers who hold valid Saskatchewan teaching certificates.

Therefore, we recommend:

12.1 ***That the educational opportunities being provided for troubled youth in institutional settings be undertaken within the School^{PLUS} environment in order to ensure the benefits of full collaboration between the Human Services, especially Social Services and Education, for these youth; and,***

12.2 ***That the colleges responsible for pre-service teacher education consider how they might offer a course, or program elective, that is designed to help students prepare for teaching responsibilities in these settings.***

[redacted]

Not surprisingly, the attention of the Task Force was repeatedly drawn to information technology and the host of issues relating to its impact on school divisions and classrooms. The range of opinion, the excitement and concern that we heard, reflected the kind of public reaction that might be expected to a quite radically new social and technological development. The insertion of this technology into the ecology of schools and classrooms has had a profound impact on education and its resources. We heard from teachers who noted the distinct improvement in student essays, particularly in rural areas where prior to the Internet the research resources of the school and community were quite limited. We also heard that computers have enriched the educational resources available to gifted students, whose exceptional needs had become difficult to support within the high demand environment of current classrooms. We noted the excitement and interest of students who both enjoyed the learning opportunities presented by computers and related technologies, and clearly believed that skills and knowledge associated with them were important to their career prospects.

At the same time we heard of the costs associated with computer and Internet technology, sometimes described as a 'black hole' by trustees, and we have also become aware of the concerns raised by educators in relation to possible negative impacts on classrooms, teachers and students.[92] Amongst the concerns we have noted are: the disruption of the classroom ecology – yet one more thing for teachers to cope with on top of everything else; the drain on school resources, and the high levels of expenditure being allocated by school

[92] These concerns have been confirmed, and further illuminated by recent reports of the study being undertaken by Simon Fraser's University Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology: see, "Computers Disrupt Classrooms: Study," the *National Post*, December 1, 2000, Front Page and A9.

divisions in support of this learning opportunity; and the skewed demands on teachers, especially those recently graduated, on whose shoulders often falls not only responsibility for teaching information technologies but also for supporting and maintaining the school network.[93] As to the level of expenditures related to this program, the Task Force was told by a smaller urban division in the province with an enrolment of 2,800 pupils that its annual expenditure on information technology was approximately $750,000. When this level of expenditure was reported to officials in other schools divisions, their responses confirmed that it fell within the normal range for that enrolment.[94]

Amidst all the controversy, the Task Force has determined that two things are inescapable: that promotion of information technology programs in schools cannot, and should not be avoided; and that these programs represent an expansion of the role of the school, and an incremental cost of not insignificant proportions. We have also come to the conclusion that although the Department of Education has not attempted to exercise undue influence in this area, probably wisely, it will need to increase its capacity and leadership in the field, especially when the call for Distance Education (see 14) is heeded.

Given this range of factors, and after deliberation, the Task Force recommends:

13.1 ***That the level of recognized expenditure for technology identified in the Foundation Operating Grant (FOG) be increased to $10 M in 2001-2002, and to $12 M in each of the following three years; and***

[$10 M in 2001-2002; and $12 M for each of the following three years]

The intent of this recommendation is not to encourage school divisions to spend more on information technology, but rather: a) to recognize that the cost of these programs to school divisions is incremental; and b) to help reduce the deficit these expenditures have created for other programming areas, especially the teacher-pupil ratio.

13.2 ***That school divisions be urged, in general, not to increase their level of expenditures on information technology as a result of this Foundation Operating Grant increase, but rather that they consider how resources that have been taken from other program areas, especially the teacher-pupil ratio, in support of information technology can be re-allocated.***

---

[93] "It boggles the mind the jobs that teachers get assigned on the way to technologizing the classroom," reports Richard Smith of Simon Fraser's University Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology, in the article cited above (footnote 92), "It's a fundamental misuse of resources. You have people trained in teaching and you're making them into system administrators of computers," Front Page.

[94] Again, the Simon Fraser study confirms the Task Force's concern: "Mr. Smith suggests the technology is draining money from education budgets, but is especially concerned about a trend that has barely trained teachers being drafted into maintaining computers…Other studies have raised similar concerns about computers in schools. In September, the Alliance for Childhood – an international association of educators, doctors and psychologists – suggested that "billions of dollars spent on school computers and Internet connections would be better spent on more teachers." *National Post*, Dec. 1, 2000, Front Page.

Finally, the Task Force believes that economies, as well as better management and support for Information Technology programs and systems, can be achieved on the basis of a regional, rather than a school-division-by-school-division approach. We also suspect that Information Technology is another area that will benefit from a more broad-based School^{PLUS} environment. In response to the concerns about the misuse of teaching staff noted by the Simon Fraser study cited above (see footnote 93), there is no reason why so much of the support service for Information Technology needs to be provided by teachers. Our impression is that this is another area where a more differentiated approach to staffing would be helpful.

13.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education undertake to provide increased leadership by: a) establishing criteria that identify reasonable expectations for infrastructure and programs in Information Technology, through consultation with the school division partners; b) creating a regional approach to the purchase of equipment and the provision of technical support services; and c) providing increased support and professional development opportunities relating to Information Technology skills and resources.***

[$500,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

[redacted]

Like Information Technology, the field of distance education is full of both promise and controversy, advocates and detractors. Given our exposure to the programs currently in existence, and the global potential, the Task Force is not in a position to provide anything like a blueprint for the future. Nevertheless, some observations can be made and some convictions shared that strike us as incontrovertible.

Saskatchewan is a population of some 1 million people; of this, there are currently approximately 188,000 school-aged children in the public school system. The rural school-aged population is on a significant decline trajectory. Given these basic facts, not to mention the fact that our economy is not bankrolled by some luxuriant resource, it behoves us to be realistic in tempering our wants with our resources. In this world it is, therefore, imperative that we: a) maximize the resources that we do have; and b) resist the temptation to waste precious resources on efforts to create expensive 'made-in-Saskatchewan' educational commodities, when reasonable facsimiles can be purchased elsewhere. This is not to say we create no products of our own, but it is to say we create them only where dictated to do so by our distinctive needs, and our historical and geographical identity. Calculus is not one of them, and neither is the French language!

The sort of rural population decline we face certainly is an indication that distance technologies could be helpful, especially for delivering specialist on-demand courses, like calculus, psychology, law and French. Although there will be an on-going need for text-based Correspondence School programs, there can be no doubt that more interactive

electronic formats are the wave of the future. At the same time there are numerous rural divisions who struggle to provide optional courses such as those already named, with small and dwindling numbers in their classes. The Task Force heard recently of a meeting of high school mathematics teachers in a given region where, among five teachers offering calculus, there were 21 pupils. During our consultations rural students mentioned law as an option they wished they could take, but it was rarely available.

In relation to the recommendations we made in the *Interim Report*, however, the Task Force wishes to note that it is satisfied that a very considerable effort, and good progress, is being made to provide high speed connectivity to all schools in the province.[95] We are especially impressed by the concept and development of CommunityNet, which promises to electronically link all schools and all government services. Moreover, we have also been assured that fine programming can be provided that does not require high speed connectivity. We are convinced, therefore, that what is now needed most is the coordination of what are still disparate agency resources and fragmented systems, and a significant push in the direction of program acquisition and delivery support for schools and school divisions.

The Task Force is pleased to note that SCN has established direct links with school divisions to deliver televized courses. SCN currently has 186 sites in schools, and has made a variety of televized courses available, including French, Math C30, Psychology 30, Law 30 and Entrepreneurship 30. These courses are broadcast from a "Broadcast School"; at present such schools include Viscount, Campbell Collegiate, and Swift Current.

The Task Force did note, however, that SCN courses were not being accessed by schools in a uniform way. Rural high school students, for example, sometimes expressed a desire to take courses like law which are, apparently, offered via SCN but not offered in their high school. There were also students who had attempted the text-based French courses from the Correspondence School who would have preferred an electronic-based option. We were not, however, able to determine just what the problems or barriers to accessibility were. It is possible that the problem is one of scheduling and the difficulty of fitting the live broadcast time into the timetable of a particular high school.

The Task Force sees real value in an integrated approach to Distance Education. We would like to see text-based, televized and digitally formatted materials and courses all available on the basis of a 'one stop' shopping model. Our impression is that this sort of integrated approach would streamline services to schools and school divisions, and simplify the challenges they face in terms of accessing programs and services.

Although the province has televized offerings of courses from one site to the entire province, there is also need for inter-school transmission and reception on a more regional and local basis. This kind of offering will permit the opportunity for face-to-face contact between teachers and students to be arranged on a periodic basis, either through students travelling to a central collegiate in the area, or where the instructor could be partially itinerant. So, for example, a calculus or French course could be delivered from Shaunavon

[95] *Interim Report*, Recommendation 8.2, p. 75.

to surrounding communities, and students travel there every two weeks for a seminar, or alternatively, the teacher could travel in an itinerant manner from Shaunavon to the other sites on a regular basis, for example, travel to Eastend every second Monday afternoon. Post-secondary distance education experience would also appear to suggest that wherever possible, the provision of on-site tutors is a considerable benefit to students as a supplement to televized programming.

Generally speaking we are pleased to hear reports of good progress being made by the province in the area of distance education and we support these efforts. With respect to developing CD and Internet-based learning packages, we urge the province to purchase, rent, borrow or adapt packages that have been developed elsewhere and commit resources to such curriculum developments only where they are especially indicated. It is difficult to see how adaptation is necessary in a calculus course, for example, whereas the cultural component in a French course might be supplemented with material relating to the Fransaskois and the Saskatchewan Métis.

We support the notion that all distance education offerings for a province with such a widely dispersed population as ours need to be made available at no cost, or at least at a cost that is very attractive, to rural and northern school divisions.

Based upon these impressions and reflections, the Task Forces recommends:

14.1 ***That an attempt be made to rationalize distance education programs and services in the province so as to provide school systems with 'one stop' shopping; and,***

14.2 ***That the current efforts of the Department of Education to enhance distance education program offerings and services to school divisions in the province be strongly supported by government.***

[redacted]

As noted in the *Interim Report*, the Task Force certainly was made aware of the strong support for career education in schools, especially from students and trustees.[96] Some teachers and other career education advocates also see career education, and especially work-based experiences, as contributing to student appreciation of the need for basic skills,

[96] For example, amongst the factors that students identified as preventing the school from fulfilling its role, was: "Career education and career counseling are inadequate." (*Interim Report*, p. 30) Students repeated this theme when it came to their thoughts about how their learning environment could be improved. One of the improvements they suggested was: "...beginning career education earlier and ensuring career counseling is readily available to all students." (*Interim Report*, p. 30) Some School Board members urged the Task Force to recommend that career education begin at Grade 6. (*Interim Report*, p. 28) And teachers supported the proposition, "Make work experience available to all students and ensure that students have the opportunity to be exposed to workplace technology." (*Interim Report*, p. 31)

such as literacy, mathematics and problem solving. It should also be noted that support for what is called 'school-to-work transition' is growing across the country.[97]

Career education, or 'career exploration', the preferred term of many educators, is in fact a multi-faceted creature. On the one hand, there is a set of skills and understandings that need to be developed and acquired, such as positive self-concept, skills to interact with others, decision making, teamwork, report writing, career and occupation planning, and managing career changes. On the other hand, students need opportunities to gain work-site experience, through co-op, work-based, job-shadowing and 'take our kids to work' programs. The former set of skills and understandings can to a large extent become part of school curricula, in courses like 'Life Transitions'.

If they are to be effective, however, Life Transition courses need to involve out-of-the-classroom experiences. In order to accommodate this experiential component the school will need to make links with the community. Naturally, the range of resources available in communities will vary, constituting a constraint within which the school must work. For example, the work place environments available in rural or northern communities will differ considerably from those in a larger urban environment. Northern students especially, raised these sorts of concerns.

While career exploration and education has many advocates, it also has detractors. Some educators worry that too much focus on occupations will transform schools into the image of the workplace, instead of preserving their focus on developmentally enriching the minds, spirits and bodies of children and youth. Premature emphasis on work can detract from appreciation for the intrinsic value of learning and thinking. Schools seen too much in the image of vocational preparation will, it is argued, thereby impoverish the learning environment, and transform it into a mere instrument of globalized economic forces.

Although the Task Force believes that these warnings need to be taken very seriously, we are not convinced that there is no place at all for career exploration and planning in the school environment. While the exit destination should not dominate school culture, neither should it be ignored. We also suspect that academically oriented critics sometimes undervalue the role of experiential, 'out-of-the-classroom' learning and its potential to enrich and reinforce academic pursuits, rather than detract from them.

If a proper balance is to be achieved, and the needs expressed by students and trustees in the matter of career education respected, then it is quite evident that the role of the school has again expanded. While some aspects of career exploration can be incorporated within the current curriculum models, it is evident that there are other aspects where the normal approach will prove inadequate. The Task Force strongly suspects that a vibrant career education program will require schools to establish strong links with the community, its trades-people, businesses and retailers, manufacturing and industry workers, its fishermen,

[97] A gathering of some 26 students met in Toronto on Saturday, April 29, 2000, representing school-to-work transition programs from many provinces and territories. A document entitled, *Synergy and Energy*, was published by The Student Commission, summarizing their reflections and recommendations.

trappers, farmers and other agricultural workers, as well as its medical, legal, financial and other professionals.

These 'links' between school and community are not established only in one way. They will be made through work placements, job-shadowing, and short-term on-site experiences, but they will also involve invitations to individuals in a variety of careers to make presentations to schools. Certainly students made it abundantly clear to the Task Force that 'career fairs', although not without value, were inadequate substitutes for a fully fledged career education program. They also stressed that it was unrealistic to expect classroom teachers to represent to students an informed perspective on a wide variety of careers; only practicing participants can bring authentic voice and insight into these matters.

Although there is a growing movement in the field of career education, and it needs to be nurtured and supported, the Task Force recognizes that it is not an area of school curriculum where absolute uniformity and consistency can or should be expected to prevail. General goals need to be established province-wide, and resources committed, but the means to these ends will need to be worked out at the local and regional levels.

In light of these considerations, the Task Force urges:

15.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community honor and act upon the request of students for enhanced career exploration and career education opportunities; and,***

15.2 ***That the experiential aspect of this learning opportunity be recognized and facilitated in whatever ways are possible; and,***

15.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education consider whatever steps it might take to support and facilitate career education efforts throughout the province, and that it establish goals to which all school divisions might strive; and,***

15.4 ***That the colleges of education ensure that the teaching of career exploration and career education is included in the pre-service teacher education programs offered to their students, particularly in Secondary Education programs; and,***

15.5 ***That wherever possible career exploration and career education opportunities be articulated with the academic program so that these curriculum areas and learning opportunities are mutually supportive, rather than competitive.***

[$300,000 in 2001-2002, and $500,000 for each of the following three years, in support of recommendations 15.1-15.5]

As examples, the writing of business letters, or various types of reports or proposals (distinguished from the 'essay' per se), are perfectly valid genres of composition; and mathematics can be activity based, and reflect 'mathematics at work' rather than representing a merely abstract phenomenon. At the same time, exposure to some workplace environments may revise students' notions about what is 'relevant' in their

schooling: concepts and skills they thought were merely esoteric and useless may turn out to be more essential in 'the real world' than they had thought!

Finally, career education needs to be seen as part of the self-assessment and evaluation components of Core Curriculum. As such, career education includes goal setting and research. This understanding and these skills will equip them for lifelong learning and for following multiple career paths, rather than thinking of the matter simply in terms of finding 'the right' career.

[redacted]

One of the areas consistently stressed in our consultations with students, especially high school students, was the importance of extracurricular activities.[98] This theme was repeated wherever the Task Force went, in rural, northern and urban areas alike. The concerns were slightly different in the different contexts, but interest in the topic was universal. Indeed, the Task Force suspects that extracurricular activity is one of the vastly underestimated areas of school role and public education.

The very name – *extra*curricular – suggests a problem immediately. What is the *base*, or *core* curriculum that establishes the boundaries of school responsibility and teacher task, beyond which everything else is 'extra'? On the basis of our conversations with students the Task Force has come to think that educators need to re-think this base, or core curriculum, and the contribution that so-called extracurricular activities make to students' learning environments. It is quite clear that whatever post-school adults make of the matter, *students see extracurricular activities as making a vital contribution to their interest in, and commitment to, schooling.*

The fact that the primary burden for organizing and leading extracurricular activities falls on the shoulders of teachers is part of the problem. Teacher fatigue becomes part of the issue. In rural and northern areas students noted quite explicitly that it was interns, and younger teachers especially, who tended to create the extracurricular activities so much appreciated by students. Obviously, there are exceptions. Some teachers manage to continue this lifestyle for much of their career, but it is not reasonable to expect regular evening and weekend in-school commitments of teachers throughout their careers, if ever.

Again, concerns about the lack of extracurricular activities were more manifest in smaller rural and northern settings than in larger urban high schools. Obviously in the urban environments the larger human resource base creates potential for programs that is simply not possible with a small – often K-12 – school staff. But the organizational point must be recognized that it is unrealistic to expect teachers, for their full career, to be spending evenings and weekends routinely engaged in organized school activities. Moreover, even

[98] See, for example, students' opinion that their learning environment could be improved by: "...increasing extracurricular learning opportunities for students" (*Interim Report*, p. 30).

where some teachers manage this feat there is little or no flexibility for recognition of this sacrifice by the school division.

Teacher recompense differs starkly in this respect from many other job environments, unionized and professional, where overtime, earned days off (EDOs), and time in lieu are routinely recognized. True, teachers are 'professionals', but it seems apparent to the Task Force that this professionalism applies one-sidedly to output expectations, not to the recompense and recognition side.

Other concerns were expressed about extracurricular activities in urban environments by students. There, some students spoke poignantly about the celebration of what they called 'jocks and nerds' in the school, with little or no recognition for the less exceptional 'Joe-citizen' kind of student. These students spoke helpfully, and eloquently, about the kind of programs that could be made available for 'ordinary' students, and how high school culture could be changed from a competitive 'hero' culture to one where all students count.

Although the Task Force felt a great deal of empathy with this student concern, we could not help but think that in these respects school was only a mirror of society at large where highly competitive 'heroes', in sports and business especially, are paid exorbitant salaries and afforded obscenely disproportionate recognition in comparison to ordinary people. If we want the values and culture of school to be different, then it will call for the creation of an exceptional vision, and the exercise of extraordinary will. We would like to issue such a call, not only to schools but to all of society as well as to students, teachers and the whole educational community. As much as we believe in this call, however, the Task Force is not so naïve as to think that such developments will come easily, or without a massive awareness campaign, and much more evidence of critical thought and social and political insight than we currently appear to possess.

Once again, if these issues relating to extracurricular activity are to be addressed as well as possible, then it will call for the effort of the whole village and the whole community. We will all need to stop passing the buck; we cannot afford to hire enough teachers to attend to everything. And students will need to be helped to examine their own culture too; perhaps there is more room for student-led and student-initiated activities.

In this regard, however, it was most heartening for the Task Force to hear students speak positively about *community service* programs that had been organized through schools. The *service orientation* seems to point in a very positive direction, and might provide a welcome counter-balance to the highly competitive 'we are the best' culture that too often accompanies school sport. There are certainly exemplary examples of this sort of program in the province and they deserve our admiration.[99] Interest-based clubs and activities too

[99] One such program is organized by Campbell Collegiate's Student Advisory Committee (SAC), and supervised by teacher Bob Vancise, in which students from Grades 8-12 organize fundraising drives and sponsor families through the Salvation Army's Adopt-a-Family program. In a recent report on this program headlined, "Campbell students help needy families, " the *Leader-Post* begins by saying, "Most of the year, the Campbell Tartans are football or basketball teams, but during the holiday season, tartan becomes a Christmas colour, and the whole school becomes a winning team for the less fortunate." (The *Leader-Post*, Saturday, December 16, 2000, p. A7). Programs like this are a very positive way to build school spirit around service to others.

can be part of the cultural alternative to activities of the hero kind: photography, international affairs, computers, art and music, and countless other activities need to be seen as curricular, and as contributing in significant ways to student learning. In addition, learning outside the walls of the classroom can enhance the extracurricular offerings, including co-op and other work experiences.

Yet the time-and-energy, teacher-fatigue barrier needs to be recognized in relation to the creation of such opportunities, especially in rural and northern areas. Here the Task Force wonders if the resources of the community could not be of assistance, and concomitantly, if we do not need to find more flexibility in the system to permit the hiring of community persons who are not teachers, and award them full supervisory status in order to increase the resources to the school and help enhance extracurricular capacity. The differential staffing feature of the School^{PLUS} environment may be very helpful in this regard.

On the basis of our hearings and reflections relating to extracurricular activity, the Task Force makes the following recommendations:

16.1 ***That all of the educational stakeholders grant greatly increased recognition to the vital role played by the so-called 'extracurricular' activities in schools, especially high schools; that these activities be granted 'curricular' standing; and that Saskatchewan Education convene an Education Partner Committee to consider how these goals might be achieved; and,***

[$200,000]

16.2 ***That the educational system find ways to be more flexible in recognizing the contributions of teachers who perform duties well beyond normal expectations, as well as enhancing the ability of the school to draw upon parents and other members of the community in order to increase the school's capacity to offer such programs; and that the Foundation Operating Grant (FOG) recognize costs for such expenditures provincially up to $1 M in 2001-2002, and up to $3 M for each of the following three years; and,***

[$1 M, in 2001-2002, and $3 M for each of the following three years]

16.3 ***That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore ways in which greater flexibility can be afforded at the school level to remunerate persons from the community, and accord them full supervisory responsibility for student activities under specified, limited conditions; and,***

16.4 ***That the educational community in the province consider how service-oriented and interest-based extracurricular activities might be further promoted, and how competitive academic and athletic ('heroes') accomplishments, especially in high schools, can be counterbalanced by recognition and celebration that is more broadly based.***

Finally, although we have expressed concern about the high school 'hero' culture, the Task Force does not intend to detract from physical activities, athletics and sports in the school program. Many students thoroughly enjoy these activities, and all students can benefit from them. Moreover teachers who unselfishly devote over-and-above time to making these programs possible need to be congratulated. What we are concerned to address, however, is the disproportionate emphasis on such programs in high schools and what seems to be an effort – probably unwitting – to build too much of the school culture around elite competition, at the expense of service and interest-based activities, and co-op work experience programs.

[redacted]

In our discussion of Community Schools earlier, the Task Force identified the need for the Community School funding schedule to be extended to high schools in the province, and not be limited as it currently is only to elementary schools (see 1.7). Beyond this funding recommendation, however, the Task Force wishes to underline its impression that generally speaking there is real need for high schools to reflect on their programs and program delivery models from the point of view of the changing character and needs of their students. There also needs to be support from school division offices for experimentation. If we are in changing times, then our school responses do not need to be viewed as carved in stone.

We need to promote the notion that schools are learning organizations that effect and monitor change in a regular, ongoing manner. A cycle that includes assessment of the school program(s), identification of problem areas, gathering further information, attempting change, monitoring the results, reviewing and reassessing the strategy, needs to become the normal way of doing business in today's high schools. The social changes we are experiencing, in many areas of the province at least, are too rapid to permit shifts from one 'best solution' (good for 10 or 20 years) to the only other 'best solution' (good for another 10 or 20 years) kind of approach.

In today's environment there will simply not be one 'best way' that stands out; there will be numerous possible organizational responses, one or two of which are worth trying (for a while). There are issues that need to be addressed, problems that need to be solved, and change possibilities that need to be attempted; but all of this needs to be approached with the attitude of 'experimenting', of 'attempting' and 'reviewing', rather than in the spirit of definitive long-term solutions. A new attitude and culture needs to be promoted in secondary education that is risk-taking, that does not see making mistakes as organizationally fatal; that believes we can learn from mistakes, with the recognition that they are essential to a healthy institutional culture and the responsive, learning organization.

Given the diversity of students and environments in the province, the Task Force has come to believe that there simply is not one template or high school model that is going to work for all students in every area of the province. In the past there has tended to be the idea

that there are a few model high schools in the province, and everyone else is measured by them and tries to be as much like them as possible. Driven by the same time-tabling device, it is not surprising that high schools have all developed a strong family resemblance. If this was ever a good approach, it will simply not do in today's environment. Individual high schools need to be released from this bondage to find their own destinies, meeting the needs of *their students* in *their area* in the best way they can, which means in ways that will probably be less 'look alike' than they are at present. The diverse needs and aspirations of our youth across the province calls for a greater diversity of high schools, and encouragement of attempts to meet those needs in different ways.

At the same time the Task Force recognizes the challenges faced by high schools. Although many high school educators recognize the diversity of their students, their program is driven by university entrance criteria; and to a large extent we recognize that the public tends to make this demand of high schools. "Every child a rocket scientist" seems to be the prevailing mind-set. A more humane and more realistic agenda is called for, one that is sensitive to the fact that high school students have different needs and will aspire to different career paths. *Diversity of student needs calls for a diversity of programs and a diversity of exit modes and exit outcomes.*

Although there is value in promoting social cohesion and mutual respect by keeping students together for much of their school experience, it is also important, especially later in their school experience, to recognize that they will choose many different career and education paths once they have completed high school. By Grades 11 and 12, it becomes artificial and contrived to force all students into a 'one size fits all' program conception. At this point in their schooling it seems advisable for students to have numerous program options, several of which prepare them for university entrance and several of which do not. The diversity of the post-high school world is not well served by a one-dimensional high school program. There needs, instead, to be a significant array of programs reflecting the variety of options students will have after high school. A rich variety of programs and tracks, therefore, needs to be built into the conception of Grades 11 and 12.

Another area of schooling that calls for continuing support and attention is that of the middle years. One of the most positive developments of the past few decades in education has been the growing awareness of the unique needs of middle years, both in terms of psychological and cognitive development, as well as in terms of appropriate pedagogical responses and approaches. The formation of the Saskatchewan Middle Years Association, and the creation of special Middle Years programs and sections in pre-service teacher education colleges, are evidence of this growing awareness. The Middle Years constitute the critical bridge between Elementary and Secondary education, and they call for unique approaches to teaching and learning. It is less clear, however, that we have fully adapted to the needs of these students in our learning programs and pedagogy.

Given these reflections the Task Force wishes to make the following recommendations:

17.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community promote a greater diversity of high schools and high school programs in the province; and,***

17.2 ***That the design of the variety of high schools be driven by the learning needs of their targeted student population, and that multiple exit outcomes be recognized, reflecting the fact that students do not share common post-high-school aspirations; and***

17.3 ***That the province give serious consideration to adopting a multi-program approach to Grade 12 matriculation which recognizes the fact that students will choose many different career and education paths after high school; and that,***

Although the custodial expectations of schools for students up to Grade 10 continue as they are at present,

17.4 ***That a 'college campus' approach be taken to Grades 11 and 12, with attendance monitored only in relation to classes (not 'spares'); and,***

17.5 ***That through increased cooperation between Saskatchewan Education, Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, and Social Services, "Retrieval" programs of various kinds be encouraged, developed and funded as part of the Community High School initiative identified in 1.7.***

[see 1.7 for identification of $3.5 M for high schools in 2001-2002, and $4.5 M per year for the next 3 years]

"Retrieval" programs are understood to designate two very different kinds of program: those which make high school studies available to adult students who wish to complete their high school after the age of 21 (as a regular high school program, not as adult upgrading); as well as programs which target 'high-risk' troubled youth. Both kinds of program are designated as 'retrieval' in current usage, although the clientele and needs represented by the students groups are very different. The Task Force sees value in both of these kinds of program and that they will benefit from the implementation of what we have called a School^{PLUS} environment, since they require a high level of interagency collaboration.

17.6 ***That the contribution of the Historic High Schools in the province be recognized and affirmed; and, that steps be taken to correct any inequities between them in relation to the provision of provincial funding, preferably on the basis of Associate School status with school divisions.***

[$1 M in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years]

Saskatchewan has been enriched by the pioneering efforts of numerous educational leaders and communities who, by dint of considerable effort and dedication, have created alternative high schools in the province which offer distinctive programs and residential facilities. These high schools have existed for many years and represent an excellent opportunity for students and families who prefer this sort of educational context.

Although private schools in some areas of the country have developed primarily as elite institutions for the rich and privileged, this tradition has not been evident in Saskatchewan. The residential schools here are subscribed by ordinary citizens from the length and breadth of the land. Athol Murray College of Notre Dame (Wilcox), College Mathieu (Gravelbourg), Rivier Academy (Prince Albert), Luther High School (Regina), Lutheran Collegiate Bible Institute (Outlook), Rosthern Junior College (Rosthern), St. Angela's Academy (Prelate), and Caronport High School (Caronport), all offer various program distinctives in terms of cultural heritage, athletics, confessional belief and extracurricular programming (music, drama and the like). They all also follow the Saskatchewan curriculum and hire certified teachers.

The Task Force supports the efforts which have led to many of these schools receiving per student support (for Saskatchewan students) at the same rate as other high schools in the province. Such arrangements do not appear to have been made for some of these schools, however, including Rivier Academy, Luther High School, Rosthern Junior College and St. Angela's.

The Task Force does not understand this action to mean that the province is obligated to support any and every high school which may emerge in the future. Criteria such as a willingness to follow the province's curriculum, hiring certified teachers, and the demonstration of long-term commitment will serve to ensure that the public interest is protected. The Task Force is especially supportive of the Historic High Schools obtaining funding on the basis of their gaining the status of Associate Schools within existing school divisions.

[redacted]

The Task Force received input from a number of sources highlighting concern over the extraordinary demand being made upon parents and families associated with school fees.[100] In one northern community, for example, we were introduced to the idea that people believed they were being "loonied and toonied to death." Offered in jest, of course, but leaving no doubt as to the community's disposition on the matter! School trips, special activities of various kinds, and even educational materials appear to be the primary reasons for this sort of fund-raising. Obviously, such requests are more onerous for poor families, and put additional pressure on children who get caught in between their families and their school peers, and sometimes their teachers.

[100] In particular we acknowledge a submission received from Joan Champ, Coordinator of the Saskatoon Communities for Children, November 22, 2000, cc'd to the Child Poverty Working Group, relating especially to the unfair burden placed on poor families. We also cite the concerns raised by a variety of parents throughout the province, as noted in the *Interim Report*: "Parents are expected to fund-raise because of lack of funding for schools…The success of such fund-raising depends on the commitment of parents [as well as their incomes, we might add]…Thus, educational opportunities for many students are unequal" (p. 26).

The Task Force recognizes the dilemma created by this issue: on the one hand we believe that these concerns must be taken seriously, on the other hand we cannot see how the total elimination of school fees is practicable. Recognizing the burden on poor families, we urge the creation of an Equity Fund of $50 per pupil for 20% of school division enrolment, to be used by the division to ameliorate the impact of school fees on students whose families are experiencing financial hardship. We also urge school divisions to monitor the extent of the fees being assigned to students for school activities and, where possible, to limit or even eliminate, the assessment of such fees altogether. Finally, we are cognizant of the fact that in northern areas the ratio of students in poverty will be higher than 20% and we urge the government, therefore, to recognize this fact for the Equity Fund through an increase in the 'Northern Factor'.

In light of these concerns the Task Force recommends:

18.1 ***That an Equity Fund be created which recognizes within the Foundation Operating Grant a cost to school divisions equivalent to $50 per pupil for 20% of their nominal student enrolment; and, that school divisions be enjoined to use this fund to ameliorate the burden of school fees for students whose families are experiencing financial hardship; and,***

[$50 x 20% x 180,000 pupils = 1.8 M for 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years]

18.2 ***That some increase in the Equity Fund for schools in the Northern Administrative District be made by means of an adjustment in the calculation of the Northern Factor, to accommodate the fact that poverty rates in the north are higher than elsewhere in the province; and,***

18.3 ***That every effort be made by Boards of Education to monitor and, where possible, limit or even eliminate the assessment of school fees.***

[redacted]

Even though much of our report is in fact articulated on the growing significance of the province's Aboriginal population, we want to mention several recommendations that explicitly target Aboriginal education. The Task Force is pleased to see the ongoing effort to integrate First Nations and Métis culture and history into the province's curriculum, as well as the effort to create courses that explicitly support First Nations languages and Aboriginal culture.[101] Building on the document, *Partners in Action*, Action Plan of the

[101] Including Cree 10/20/30, and Native Studies 10/20/30.

Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee,[102] we urge the province continue to make strides in this area.[103]

We are conscious of the fact, however, that in spite of these good efforts there continues to be evidence of racism, as well as a general lack of awareness of Aboriginal history and culture. In our consultation process we were reminded by students that some teachers and students continue to have negative and racist attitudes.[104] So there is much work that still needs to be done in support of anti-racist programs and strategies.

There are also critical emerging issues in the realm of governance and funding. Already a wide variety of understandings and tuition agreements exist between Indian Bands and local school divisions. Moreover, the movement of First Nations families off reserve (currently 48%, most of whom are in urban environments) and the creation of urban reserves, ensures that the issue of education will have a high priority for the provincial and federal governments, not to mention the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, urban school divisions and many Indian bands (especially those linked to urban reserves). There is now considerable talk in the province of parallel and jointly-operated school systems.[105]

Finally, given the current shortage of teachers of Aboriginal ancestry in our schools, and the considerable difficulties being experienced by northern boards of education in attracting and retaining qualified teachers, the Task Force strongly supports the enhancement of funding available to the Aboriginal teacher education programs, NORTEP and SUNTEP. The need for secondary teachers (for high schools) in all subject areas is especially acute.

Although our consultations do not constitute a major study of the complex issues relating to Aboriginal education, the Task Force does have some very strong recommendations to make in this area, namely,

19.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community continue to give cross-cultural education and anti-racist programs a high priority, both for schools and students, and also amongst educators in general; and,***

---

[102] *Partners in Action*, Action Plan of the Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee, Saskatchewan Education, December, 1991,

[103] The Aboriginal Education Unit of Saskatchewan Education, currently headed by Gloria Mehlmann, ensures that this work will continue.

[104] See *Interim Report*, p. 30. Sad to say poignant comments made by children and youths during our interviews at Ranch Ehrlo confirmed the fact of racism in schools and 'on the streets'.

[105] The phenomenon of parallel school systems is already a fact of life in a number of northern communities where both a Band-operated and a public school system exist in the same town or settlement, e.g., in La Ronge, Cumberland House, and La Loche. In some cases the Indian Band has taken over the school once operated by the provincial system, e.g., Stanley Mission, Deschambault Lake, Southend Reindeer and Hatchet Lake (Wollaston). In La Ronge a tuition agreement exists between the Northern Lights School Division No. 113 and the Lac La Ronge Indian Band that allows families in the community to choose the school of their preference (Band-operated or public).

19.2 ***That Saskatchewan Education continue to strongly support its Aboriginal Education Unit, as well as promoting school division program and curriculum initiatives in cross-cultural and anti-racism education; and,***

[$750,000 in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years for Aboriginal Ed Unit and School Division initiatives]

19.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education create a 'clearing house' for cross-cultural and Aboriginal education resources, including Indian Languages, Native Studies, cross-cultural and anti-racist education materials that are developed by school divisions in the province; and,***

[$150,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

19.4 ***That the province continue to strongly support programs which offer opportunities for First Nation and Métis students to become teachers, such as NORTEP and SUNTEP and, particularly, to encourage the preparation of more teachers at the secondary level; and,***

[$500,000, in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years, by the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, for program support (of the TEPs) and scholarships]

19.5 ***That the two universities in the province, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, ensure that their colleges of education have sufficient resources to permit the creation of specialist Aboriginal Education units, as well as opportunities to hire faculty of Indian and Métis ancestry; and***

19.6 ***That school divisions endeavor to create joint-venture schools, with Tribal Councils and Indian Bands, which strongly reflect and support Aboriginal children, their languages and culture; and,***

19.7 ***That the province continue to recognize the unique needs of northern education, and the role of the school in supporting not only the education of children but also the on-going economic and social development of northern communities.***

[redacted]

The Task Force quite consistently heard opinions expressed about the needs of children and youth with respect to character development issues and concerns. In the *Interim Report*, for example, we noted comments such as,

> *Children and youth lack spiritual and moral direction.* (School Board official, p. 29)

Northern Trustees especially emphasized that,

> *...the loss of traditional culture in the North has left children and youth with few common moral values to live by.* (p. 29)

Teachers emphasized,

> *...the importance of [students] becoming "good citizens" by accenting the importance of respect and integrity in all school programming.* (p. 32)

And the researcher who studied the data collected from all of the consultations commented,

> *All groups suggest that, because of the pervasive influence of the media, many students need more adult supervision and guidance than they are currently receiving. Students suggest they need to be educated and supported in making the right choices regarding drugs (including alcohol) and sexual involvement.* (p. 10)

Earlier in this report we also drew attention to a number of shifting forces (tectonic plates) that are having an impact on the school today (Section 1, part 3, The Tectonic Factors). A number of the factors noted in Section 1 have direct bearing on the character development of children and youth. They include poverty (3.4) and proportions of 'at-risk' students (3.5), violence in schools (3.13), cross-cultural issues and racism (3.8), the impact of family changes (3.7), youth suicide as an indicator of social pathology (3.14), evidence of child and youth emotional disturbance (3.14), and the under-performance of Canadian youth compared with their Scandinavian counterparts in relation to behaviors that are "often" or "always" kind and helpful (3.14). *These reflections suggest that we face a considerable challenge as a society in terms of promoting a healthy and supportive environment within which the moral and spiritual character of our children and youth may be expected to mature and flourish.*

Schools have, of course, historically always played an important role in promoting the character development of children and youth. Usually this aspect of the curriculum has been woven into a variety of subjects, like the study of literature and social studies, as well as being an important part of what has been called the implicit curriculum (all of the school's activities and practices outside of the formal curriculum), where values like respect, industry, punctuality and fairness have traditionally been promoted. Today, we are keenly aware of the limitations of the past in this regard, however, and recognize that many oppressive values have also been perpetuated by such means, especially relating to race and gender.

In public schools today the direction for character formation in the explicit curriculum is primarily promoted on the basis of the Common Essential Learning (CEL) called "Personal and Social Values and Skills" identified in the Core Curriculum. The Core Curriculum intends this learning to be woven throughout all of the instruction that takes place within the school, as well as in the implicit school environment, including extracurricular activities. This CEL identifies many noble values, such as compassion and fair-

mindedness, respect for persons and commitment to truth, elimination of discrimination and bias, as well as the fact that moral relativism is not a defensible stance for educators. In this CEL moral reasoning is understood as a process that requires knowledge of issues and fundamental moral values. In Catholic school systems this CEL is typically supplemented through the explicit teaching of a course in "Christian Ethics."

In spite of the above-mentioned CEL, however, for some time now public educators have felt a certain amount of ambiguity and uncertainty about their role in character formation. Reaction to excesses of the past, especially to what came to be thought of as an 'indoctrination' model of moral education, has inclined educators towards a more modest and tentative strategy. Typically, they have adopted models of moral education which conceive of the role of the teacher *as a facilitator* who helps students clarify their own values, rather than promoting those of the school, teacher, parents or society (values are a personal choice).[106]

Moreover, controversy over issues like school prayer, and the celebration of what are seen as religion-specific holidays, has also tended to leave teachers fearful lest the values and traditions they promote clash with those espoused by some parents. Under these circumstances refuge has often been found in the attempt to create an antiseptic environment for schools in which all distinctives pertaining to religion are laundered out of the classroom. In the place of religious holidays, for example, seasonal celebrations become the order of the day. Whether some important values associated with these religious holidays are not also lost in the process is, perhaps, a moot point.

It is certainly ironic that in an era when diversity is so much celebrated the school classroom should in fact, intentionally and by design, become increasingly bereft of historic and cultural traditions and practices. Whether in the interest of protecting minorities, or creating the least offense, an erasure approach is taken to religious and spiritual matters. Taken to its logical conclusion, this approach would appear to dictate that the best practice for schools around the world is to create a classroom culture that does not reflect any of the prevailing worldviews, and is disconnected from its social environment. *Can this be our best thinking on these matters?*

Recently, efforts to incorporate Aboriginal culture into schools has raised the issue of 'school values' in a new light. Typically, Aboriginal peoples see their spirituality as inextricably part of their culture. This perspective contrasts starkly with the philosophy of secularism which has, for the most part, been adopted as a neutral alternative to what was seen as sectarian discourse in education. Confronted by Aboriginal spirituality, secularism

---

[106] As in the "Values Clarification" movement (see the writings of L. Raths and H. Kirschenbaum). In the model of moral education promoted by the Harvard psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, too, the teacher's role is more along facilitator lines: the teacher merely promotes normal cognitive development to take place. The role of culture, families, church and tradition in all of this is pretty much lost in these decision-making models. More recently a shift in moral education has been noted in the "Character Education" movement, especially see, Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, Bantam, 1991. Our approach to the formation of character, however, strongly embraces social responsibility as well as personal morality. We share with Lickona, however, a vision for *the very positive role that schools can play in character formation*, rather than the merely facilitative role suggested by the other models.

turns out to look less neutral, and certainly less worldview-friendly than had previously been thought. Secularism turns out in fact to be a worldview of its own, and a fairly exclusive one at that. All of this has thrown public education into something of a quandary. How should we proceed, and what sort of worldview discourse should schools adopt? The issue becomes further complicated when it is recognized that even within the Aboriginal community, there exist considerable differences of tradition, opinion and religious commitment.

Partly perhaps as a result of the Aboriginal emphases on spirituality as integral to culture, some educators are looking more favorably than in the past upon recognizing the spiritual dimension of teaching and schools. We can, with our American neighbors, speak of separating church and state, organizationally and legally, *but is it meaningful to separate education and the spiritual?* Would we not be making a 'spiritual' statement if we were to banish all talk of the spiritual from the classroom? Thus, it is difficult, if not impossible, to see the spiritual as an aspect of life that can simply be erased out of public education and privatized. But any recognition of spirituality will need to recognize different traditions and beliefs. Perhaps what we need is a school culture and discourse that recognizes and respects differences, rather than one that erases them and thereby evacuates education of all spiritual significance.

Amidst these complexities, and perplexities too, the question of the role of the school in the character formation of children persists. Surely we cannot fail in our obligation to bequeath to children and youth a solid foundation of core values. Surely we all want to nurture the values of respect, justice, fairness, equity, tolerance, honesty, truth and integrity. Surely we want to eliminate discrimination and racism. Surely we want a more caring society, and thus to promote responsibility, citizenship, the importance of service to others, and concern for the welfare of the community, the nation and the world, along with respect for personal rights and freedoms.

The Task Force believes strongly that the needs of children and youth today have created for us as a society, and for our schools, an imperative with respect to character formation that we ignore at our peril. *We see the need to bring fresh vigor to the task of promoting character education in our schools. We see this as a positive task that involves nurturing and promoting values, ideals and wisdom, rather than merely facilitating discussion and clarifying values (though these activities have a pedagogical place too).*

Thus, we recommend,

20.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community reaffirm the role of the school in the character formation of children and youth; and,***

20.2 ***That Saskatchewan Education re-examine and update the CEL, Personal and Social Values and Skills, and especially that it be articulated so as to promote a strong role for the school in the character formation of children and youth; and further, that the notions of responsibility for neighbor, citizenship, caring for others, and community service, be promoted as inspiring ideals; and,***

20.3 ***That the revision of Personal and Social Values and Skills CEL take full cognizance of the context of children and youth today, especially the media environment (including video games); and that teaching and learning strategies be promoted which encourage critical thinking about this environment, especially as regards violence, gender and racial stereotyping, racism and discrimination of all kinds; and,***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and $100,000 for each year thereafter]

In the revision of the above-mentioned CEL, and within the Saskatchewan education community,

20.4 ***That a discourse be developed which recognizes the importance of worldviews, acknowledges differences of tradition and belief, but which strongly nurtures the values of respect and tolerance; and,***

Based upon the revised curriculum and the development of other materials,

20.5 ***That a major school and curriculum initiative, focusing on character formation and education, be launched by Saskatchewan Education and the other Education partner organizations.***

[$500,000 for each year, 2002-2005]

[redacted]

If there is some potential for the campus notion of high school in urban areas, there may be even more potential for an expanded model that is strongly linked to community development in rural areas. In the face of population decline the ability of rural communities to support various kinds of service outlets has become severely strained. Some communities have already established links between the school and the community in terms of recreation facilities.[107] Still further steps to mitigate these impacts might be taken by exploiting the potential of other school-community partnerships and cooperatives. Select appropriate services could be mounted on a joint venture basis that serves both to enhance school programs and at the same time expand community capacity.

We have already noted the potential for school shops to mount quasi-commercial ventures, and there is every reason to see the potential for similar developments in other areas. Trades (electrical, plumbing), craft shops, information processing and computer service outlets, greenhouses and florist shops, bookstores, libraries, snow removal and yard care, gardening, shopping and small jobs for seniors, hair salons, small engine repair,

[107] Such initiatives have been undertaken in Tisdale and Maymont, for example, where they have met with great success.

woodworking and photography services could be developed as cooperatives, or as joint ventures between the school and a local entrepreneur.

These businesses could be labs for entrepreneurship courses, as well as co-op work placements that are associated with school-to-work transition programs. Trades training could be directly linked to some of these programs (contributing to Apprenticeship and Journeyman qualifications). Obviously in any given community only a few of these projects would be implemented, but a full list is given to be suggestive of the potential.

Projects relating to information technology need to be highlighted. Here is an area where students may well possess the lion's share of expertise in a community and where the services they could provide, including evening courses, could add real value. Again, the service could be developed on a cooperative basis or, sometimes, as a joint venture with a local entrepreneur. These management structures will ensure that profits are reinvested back into the service and retained in the community, rather than being drained off to larger centers and out of the province.

Courses relating to business management, and especially to the structure of cooperatives, should be an integral part of all such developments. In order to be feasible, however, the current rigid limitations on public schools vis á vis commercial venture would need to be examined, and if necessary new legislation created that permitted the creation of cooperatives, joint ventures and even spin-off companies. We especially see potential for such developments in the context of the dwindling resources of rural communities, in northern communities and in small towns. At the same time programs such as these have the potential to make a very positive contribution to the extracurricular programs of the school and the character formation of the students.

In light of these considerations the Task Force recommends,

21.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community consider ways in which School^{PLUS} programs might become an integral part of the overall community development strategy for rural and northern communities; and,***

21.2 ***That, in particular, avenues be explored that might permit the development of school-community cooperatives and joint ventures that will provide entrepreneurial labs and co-op work experiences for students and services for communities; and,***

[$150,000 in 2001-2002, and 100,000 in each of the following three years, to support recommendations 21.1 and 21.2]

21.3 ***That the Saskatchewan educational partners explore what, if any, legal and contractual issues relating to the development of school-community cooperatives exist, and how they might best be handled; and,***

21.4 ***That the Saskatchewan educational partners and other agencies (governmental and non-governmental) explore possible funding arrangements for school-community cooperatives; and,***

The Task Force believes that the Credit Unions and the Department of Economic and Cooperative Development should be explored as possible partners for funding and cooperative in-service training.

21.5 ***That the province be canvassed for the location of 5-7 suitable sites, especially in rural and northern areas, for the establishment of pilot projects.***

[$100,000 in 2001-2002, and $175,000 in each of the following three years]

[redacted]

In this section we examine the implications of School[PLUS] for facilities as well as noting the budget resources that will be required if the vision is to become operational.

[redacted]

The Task Force is aware that our recommendations have very important implications for facilities. One way of looking at these implications is to think of what new schools would look like on the model of School[PLUS]. If we take a truly integrated human services model for schools seriously, then obviously the physical configuration of schools will look very different indeed. Another way of looking at the implications would be to consider the fact that an integrated approach to all of the human services for children and youth calls for an integrated approach to the planning of these services. In other words, we are not just talking about building new schools but the *whole facilities planning process*, for all of the human service departments insofar as their service relates to children and youth. Certainly this broader implication for facilities also exists within the concept of School[PLUS] and the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network.

Both of the implications noted above represent quite radical departures from current thinking. The Task Force found few examples of recent school construction that incorporated even a modest gesture towards an integrated services model. The time has come to re-visit these efforts, but we recognize that it will take the implementation of an *authorized* service integration environment in order for real steps to be taken in this direction.

In addition to thoughts about the facility implications of the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, the Task Force wonders if our thinking could not go even a little further, especially for high schools. We wonder, for example, if some future facility

developments might not move towards a full campus model, especially for high schools, that included not only human service offices but also a mall-like concept.

The School^{PLUS} mall could incorporate such services as: a daycare facility; an exercise room, and if feasible a swimming pool; medical and dental offices; a police detachment office (especially one that includes a school resource officer); some commercial ventures like a bookstore, convenience store, coffee shop, a craft store, a youth-oriented clothing store, popular fast-food outlet, a hair salon, computer store, sports equipment store, and so on. Responsibility for construction and management would be the responsibility of the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, but other space could be leased out on a commercial basis.

The possibility of student-operated-and-managed ventures should not be ignored. Such ventures, associated with transition-to-work and co-op education programs, could create positive learning opportunities for students. Even in current facilities it is not clear why the school automotive or woodworking shop or photographic facilities could not incorporate modest commercial ventures.

Obviously what we have called the full campus model will not, and should not, become the norm for all future school construction. In some cases, such as large urban high schools, and in larger towns, the full campus model might have real merit. In larger towns especially, the expanded campus model might prove to make a positive contribution to the creation of a viable service environment. In all future construction projects, however, the inclusion of at least minimal facility for expanded services needs to be considered.

The Task Force wishes, therefore, to make the following recommendations with respect to facilities,

22.1 ***That Saskatchewan Education, the other Human Service Departments, and the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation strike a committee to examine the implications of an integrated approach to school and human services that addresses: a) new construction projects; and b) the management of all office and school facilities that relate to a School^{PLUS} model; and,***

22.2 ***That the merits of an expanded campus model be considered for some new high schools, in select cases, that incorporates a considerably expanded service environment and possibly even some commercial space; and that the implications for construction, as well as legal ramifications (*The Education Act *imposes fairly strict limits on school divisions' freedom to lease space), be explored by the Saskatchewan education community, the human service departments and the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the three following years, to facilitate recommendations 22.1 and 22.2]

[redacted]

Given the turning point that the province has reached with respect to its demographics, and its changing social and economic profile, the Task Force believes that the Government of Saskatchewan must address both the needs and the enormous potential presented by the children and youth of the province. We worry that our aging population has begun to limit its horizons to medical care, roads and taxes, and that the needs of children and youth have had to take a back seat. We see no evidence of discretionary funding being steered in the direction of education and services to children and youth. If we are not careful, and if we fail to support the generation represented by our children and youth, we will not have a society worth being healthy about!

While some of the strategies in this report are intended to permit more optimal use of resources that already exist, the Task Force is convinced that a determined effort is needed to provide a significant injection of incremental funding for education and services to children and youth in this province. The time is now. The opportunities have never been greater.

While the Task Force does not see its terms of reference including a detailed, cost-accounted analysis of the funding required for all of the initiatives and programs which we have recommended in this report, we have endeavored to provide a rough estimate of an appropriate level of expenditure. For this budget we invite the reader to consult APPENDIX 1, Budget Estimates. We believe that these estimates provide a good beginning for the development of the programs identified. Obviously, further analysis of the costs would be required as these programs move into the implementation phase.

Therefore, we recommend,

23.1 ***That the Government allocate funds in accordance with the implementation budget found in APPENDIX 1, Budget Estimates.***

[redacted]

[redacted]

The Task Force is aware that the recommendations contained within this report represent an enormous piece of work for the province, its government, educators, human service providers and its communities. At the same time, we believe that our vision represents a better tomorrow, for children and youth and for the province.

Amidst a cacophony of voices from many sectors in the province – representing many good and legitimate causes – the Task Force is concerned that children and youth are being

overlooked. We believe that the most urgent item on the Government agenda today is the re-creation of school and human services in the image of our province's children and youth. In the interest of promoting this vital cause, and by way of ensuring that the recommendations in this report are translated from ideas into action, the Task Force recommends the creation of an action-oriented monitoring process.

Therefore, we recommend,

24.1 ***That the Government create a broad-based action-oriented monitoring process, including a core committee, to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report; and further,***

The Human Services Integration Forum will, hopefully, play an important role in the implementation of this report. The Regional Intersectoral Committees and the Regional Education offices will also, doubtless, have a key role to play. In addition to these bodies, however, the Task Force sees the need for a body specifically dedicated to the implementation of this report, with representation from key governmental and non-governmental agencies.

24.2 ***That this committee, and process, be known as the School^{PLUS} Children and Youth Monitoring and Action Plan (SCYMAP).***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

We see SCYMAP's role and responsibilities in terms of a bridging measure until the Saskatchewan Education and Human Service Network is fully operational.

We also see the need for further thought, and materials development, relating to the major concepts embedded in this report. For this reason we recommend that SCYMAP be given the capacity to create special-topic consultation committees that will further examine the nature of School^{PLUS}, the role of the teacher and in-school administrators, partnerships with students and parents, and other such topics. We have sketched some basic ideas relating to these concepts in this report, but we firmly believe that a great deal more work should be done on them. We are guided in this suggestion by the model of the *Directions* Report and the helpful materials that were developed in connection with Core Curriculum.

Finally, we see considerable value in the broad-based ***Symposium***, created by the Task Force in October 2000, as a follow-up to our *Interim Report*. We believe that a ***Symposium*** like this would make an invaluable contribution to the consultation and consensus-building process necessary as follow-up to the publication of this report.

Therefore, we recommend,

24.3 ***That SCYMAP be given the mandate and resources to develop special-topic materials, and create a broad-based Symposium, as follow-up to this report.***

CONCLUSION

In the end our investigation into the role of the school has led the Task Force to re-evaluate how we deliver all human services to children and youth. We are persuaded that the issues we have identified call for decisive and determined intervention. We fear that the failure to grasp the urgency and significance of the moment, the magnitude of the concerns we have raised and the responses they invite, could result in serious long-term consequences for our province.

Our proposal to re-create school and human service in the image of children and youth calls for a visionary spirit that is prepared to make a generous commitment of human and financial resources in the cause of a brighter and better future. We believe the time for such action is now.

SUMMARY: RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Structure, Roles and Partnerships

1. Community Schools

1.1 ***That a Community School philosophy be adopted for all public schools in the province.***

[$400,000 in 2001-2002 - to support promotion and development - and $300,000 for each of the next 3 years]

1.2 ***That the educational partner and stakeholder organizations, including the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents (LEADS), the colleges of education and parent organizations,[108] study the issue with a view to finding appropriate ways to support this philosophy within their jurisdiction and their membership.***

1.3 ***That all of the educational stakeholder organizations do everything within their power to promote an approach to leadership and school administration that is consistent with a Community School philosophy, that,***

- ***Seeks to be collaborative, rather than adversarial;***
- ***Seeks to promote the development of staff, rather than merely exercising control;***
- ***Seeks to share power and value team work;***
- ***Possesses negotiating and mediation skills;***
- ***Seeks the common interest base in an attempt to resolve conflict;***
- ***Values morale and organizational climate;***
- ***Finds ways to meaningfully consult student opinion, and attempts to adapt the school program in light of this input;***
- ***Values parents as partners in the education of children;***
- ***Sees the community as a resource, and seeks ways to incorporate these resources in the life of the school.***

1.4 ***That Saskatchewan Education take the following steps to address the concerns identified above, by:***

- ***Renaming the funding schedule adopted for Community Schools, in light of the fact that potentially all schools in the province will eventually (we hope) become Community Schools;***

[108] By 'parent organizations' we refer to the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils (SASC), Parent-Teacher Associations, Parent Councils, and the like.

- ***Separating the concept of Community School from the funding schedule; for example, calling the funding formula an 'at-risk student factor';***
- ***Enhancing its Community School unit so as to be able to support and promote a major Community School initiative throughout the province.***

1.5 ***That the Community School funding program (as it is currently known), continue to be expanded.***

[$2.4 M for the equivalent of a 12-school expansion, @ 200,000 per school in 2001-2002 and $2.4 M for each of the next 3 years, but see 1.6 re: implementation of a graduated scale]

1.6 ***That the expansion of the 'Community School' funding schedule (the 'at-risk student factor') include the potential for a graduated scale.***

1.7 ***That the expansion of the 'Community School' funding schedule (the 'at-risk student factor') include the designation of high schools as well as elementary schools.***

[$3.5 M, for 14 schools @ 250,000 per school in 2001-2002 and $4.5 M for each of the next 3 years]

[redacted]

2.1 ***That the responsibility for School^{PLUS} be seen as belonging to all human service departments - Social Services, Health, Justice, Saskatchewan Education, Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training – as well as their third-party agencies, and community organizations.***

2.2 ***That Cabinet authorize the creation of an authority responsible for public education and the integration of human services to children and youth; and, that this integration be articulated so as to create services that are school-linked and school-based; and further, that the authority responsible for this integration be known as the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN).***

2.3 ***That in keeping with this reform Cabinet create an Interagency Fund: a) to support the creation of the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, and b) to allow the Network to deliver a wide range of integrated programs and services for children and youth within the School^{PLUS} environment.***

[$7,250,000 in the first year; and $23,500,000 per year for the following 3 years; see APPENDIX 1, Budget Estimates, for a breakout of the allocations to the different government departments]

2.4 ***That the human services integration reform authorized by Cabinet incorporate a revision of the performance review criteria applicable to government officials so that contributions to services integration are recognized and rewarded; and further, that this recognition include all efforts to cooperate and collaborate with other human services agencies, both within government and in the community at-large.***

2.5 ***That Cabinet recognize the significant dysfunction created in the province by the lack of coterminous boundaries for its human service agencies, and take whatever steps are necessary to address this problem and effect a solution.***

2.5.1 ***That consideration be given to the creation of coterminous boundaries for Education, Health, and Social Services at a regional level within a three-year time frame.***

[$500,000 multi-agency support, for 2002-2005]

2.5.2 ***That the Regional Education offices be charged by Cabinet with the responsibility to work with the Health Districts and Social Services offices in their region to effect a rationalization of services for children and youth, so as to ensure that any given school division will relate to only one office with respect to a particular human service.***

[$500,000 in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years to allow Regional Education offices to support rationalization of services to children and youth]

2.6 ***That the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training be included within the mix of interagency human services.***

3. The School Environment

3.1 ***That the Government of Saskatchewan authorize the principle that all services to children and youth in the province shall be delivered in a truly integrated environment that is school-linked and, where possible and feasible, school-based.***

3.2 ***That Cabinet instruct senior officials from all of the human service agencies, including Health, Social Services, Justice and Education, to meet and determine appropriate procedures for the coordination of future budget submissions from their departments relating to children and youth, so as to best support the integrated services model represented by School^{PLUS}.***

3.3 ***That Cabinet instruct its senior officials from the above-mentioned human service departments to consider what sort of administrative arrangements and mechanisms***

might best support the assignment of staff from any agency to the School[PLUS] environment.

3.4 *That the Interagency Fund be used, in part, to support the creation of School[PLUS].*

3.5 *That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore the implications of the differentiated staffing environment entailed by School[PLUS]. Further, it is proposed that Saskatchewan Education take the lead in calling the first meeting to discuss the most appropriate mechanism and process for addressing these issues and questions.*

3.6 *That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore the organizational and legal implications of creating the integrated services environment suggested by School[PLUS], including governance, supervision, liability and legislation.*

3.7 *That a broad-based interagency group, including the Human Services Integration Forum (HSIF), and representatives from SSTA, STF, and LEADS be convened to consider the creation of an authorized, truly integrated human services environment that is articulated with public education and is focused on the needs of children and youth (earlier we called this environment the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network – SEAHSN).*

3.8 *That the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation give consideration to creating a Special Subject Council for the purpose of addressing issues pertaining to "Community Schools/School[PLUS]."*

[redacted]

4.1 *That within the expanded human services environment created by School[PLUS], the paramount role of the teacher should be that of educator.*

4.2 *That the education partners, especially the STF and the pre-service colleges of education, endeavor to promote the understandings and skills implicit in School[PLUS] and provide appropriate pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities.*[109]

4.3 *That costs associated with the purchase of school supplies by teachers, up to $300 per teacher/per annum, be recognized in the Foundation Operating Grant; and, that Boards of Education create individual teacher accounts in this amount and*

[109] See APPENDIX 2, School[PLUS] and the Teacher.

authorize teachers to claim such expenses as they may incur by submitting the appropriate receipts.

[$300 x 12,000 teachers = $3.6 M in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years]

5. The Role of In-School Administrators

5.1 ***That the Saskatchewan educational community recognize the expanded role for in-school administrators implicit within the School^{PLUS} environment; and,***

5.2 ***That in order to meet the growing need for integrated services coordination, additional funding be provided to school divisions to allow them to increase the administrative capacity of their schools; and,***

[$5 M in 2001-2002, and $8 M for each of the following three years]

5.3 ***That a broad-based, ad hoc committee of representatives from the Saskatchewan education community, including at least two in-school administrators, consider the implications for contract, job description, remuneration and accountability that are implicit within the notion of a truly integrated, school-linked and school-based approach to the human services; and,***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years]

5.4 ***That the committee be expanded over time to include representation from all of the human service agencies.***

6. Pre-Service Teacher Education

6.1 ***That the two colleges of education in the province, at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, as well as the Aboriginal teacher education programs, NORTEP, SUNTEP, ITEP and the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Department of Indian Education, carefully consider the implications of the integrated human services environment contained within School^{PLUS}, and, that they determine how their undergraduate and graduate programs might best be changed and adapted to support this new environment; and in particular,***

6.2 ***That the colleges and Aboriginal teacher education programs consider the role of the teacher and the role of the in-school administrator implied by School^{PLUS} and***

determine how the knowledge, understanding and skills requisite for an integrated human services environment might be promoted.

[redacted]

7.1 *That the participation and involvement of students become a cornerstone of both school policy and its application; and further,*

7.2 *That a variety of opportunities and venues be created in high school and middle years settings for soliciting the student voice, including conducting surveys and creating focus groups, and that the canvassing of such opinion be regarded as a vital component of needs assessment and high school reform; and further,*

7.3 *That all Saskatchewan high schools embrace a school policy assessment cycle that includes canvassing student opinion on at least an annual basis, and reflection by staff on the feedback, with a view to modifying school policy and practice.*

[redacted]

8.1 *That the role of parents as active participants in the education of their children be affirmed and promoted by the Saskatchewan education community; and further,*

8.2 *That the STF, and the pre-service colleges of education, promote a concept of teacher professionalism that includes parents and other professional and community resources, as important partners for schools and teachers; and,*

8.3 *That LEADS and the pre-service colleges of education promote a concept of school administration that recognizes the value of parents and other professional and community resources for the school, and that the values and skills of power sharing, negotiation and mediation be supported and nurtured.*

8.4 *That efforts be made, and resources allocated, to support the partnership with parents through enhanced coordination between the school and the community (see 5), and through the provision of professional development opportunities designed to equip parents for their role in supporting the learning opportunities of their children.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

9.1 ***That a policy review be undertaken to assess how optimal health and learning services and opportunities for children aged 0-5 might be assured for all children; and,***

[$300,000 in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years, identified for Education in our Budget Estimates, APPENDIX 1, but could be jointly funded with Health and Social Services]

9.2 ***That the number of places in pre-Kindergarten programs in the Community Schools be significantly expanded.***

[$2 M in 2001-2002, and the same for each of the next 3 years, to increase pre-Kindergarten program places]

9.3 ***That the needs of children aged minus-9 months to 5 be included in an authorized framework for human services and public education (see Recommendation 3.7), so as to ensure that optimal integration of all services for these children is achieved.***

9.4 ***That the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (PSEST) endeavor to develop adult education programs for parents and other caregivers, in tandem with early childhood and pre-Kindergarten programs.***

[redacted]

10.1 ***That a determined and well funded intervention strategy be developed by the province to address the situation of Hidden Youth.***

[In 2001-2002: Education – $1 M, and Social Services – 225,000; and for each of the following 3 years: Education – $2 M, and Social Services – $1 M]

10.2 ***That an ad hoc committee be struck with representation of officials from Education and Social Services, as well as LEADS (or local school division official), the STF (including at least one classroom teacher) as well as a practicing social worker and a representative from a police resource officer program, to address the issue of responsibility for absenteeism follow-up; that this committee be charged with responsibility to develop a protocol for handling the issue of absenteeism so as to clarify as much as possible the various agency roles and responsibilities; and that***

this protocol be widely advertised and promoted in Social Services and Education, and in all school divisions.

[$300,000]

10.3 ***That the current efforts in Region No. 4 to develop a pupil tracking system articulated between the school divisions in the Region and schools operated by Indian Bands, with the assistance of the tribal council, be promoted and supported; that upon successful conclusion of this pilot project, this model be extended to the entire province; and that the Regional Education offices take the lead in promoting and supporting this initiative; and that where incremental costs to support this initiative are indicated, they be fully recognized on a developmental, and ongoing basis.***

[$50,000 in 2001-2002 and $100,000 for each of the next 3 years]

[redacted]

11.1 ***That where sentences under the provisions of* The Young Offenders Act *include school attendance, the Justice system ensure that there is follow up with the sentenced individuals and that appropriate background information is communicated to school division officials with regard to the conviction(s) and the sentence.***

11.2 ***That when so informed by the Justice system, school officials exercise due diligence in the communication of all relevant information regarding such sentences to in-school administrators and teachers; and,***

11.3 ***That a broad-based committee be struck to examine the issue of court orders and school attendance, with a view to clarifying the policies, protocols and communications responsibilities around this issue; and, that the results of its deliberation be published widely.***

[redacted]

12.1 ***That the educational opportunities being provided for troubled youth in institutional settings be undertaken within the School^{PLUS} environment in order to ensure the benefits of full collaboration between the Human Services, especially Social Services and Education, for these youth; and,***

12.2 ***That the colleges responsible for pre-service teacher education consider how they might offer a course, or program elective, that is designed to help students prepare for teaching responsibilities in these settings.***

[redacted]

13.1 ***That the level of recognized expenditure for technology identified in the Foundation Operating Grant (FOG) be increased to $10 M in 2001-2002, and to $12 M in each of the following three years; and***

[$10 M in 2001-2002; and $12 M for each of the following three years]

13.2 ***That school divisions be urged, in general, not to increase their level of expenditures on information technology as a result of this Foundation Operating Grant increase, but rather that they consider how resources that have been taken from other program areas, especially the teacher-pupil ratio, in support of information technology can be re-allocated.***

13.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education undertake to provide increased leadership by: a) establishing criteria that identify reasonable expectations for infrastructure and programs in Information Technology, through consultation with the school division partners; b) creating a regional approach to the purchase of equipment and the provision of technical support services; and c) providing increased support and professional development opportunities relating to Information Technology skills and resources.***

[$500,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

[redacted]

14.1 ***That an attempt be made to rationalize distance education programs and services in the province so as to provide school systems with 'one stop' shopping; and,***

14.2 ***That the current efforts of the Department of Education to enhance distance education program offerings and services to school divisions in the province be strongly supported by government.***

[redacted]

15.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community honor and act upon the request of students for enhanced career exploration and career education opportunities; and,***

15.2 ***That the experiential aspect of this learning opportunity be recognized and facilitated in whatever ways are possible; and,***

15.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education consider whatever steps it might take to support and facilitate career education efforts throughout the province, and that it establish goals to which all school divisions might strive; and,***

15.4 ***That the colleges of education ensure that the teaching of career exploration and career education is included in the pre-service teacher education programs offered to their students, particularly in Secondary Education programs; and,***

15.5 ***That wherever possible career exploration and career education opportunities be articulated with the academic program so that these curriculum areas and learning opportunities are mutually supportive, rather than competitive.***

[$300,000 in 2001-2002, and $500,000 for each of the following three years, in support of recommendations 15.1-15.5]

[redacted]

16.1 ***That all of the educational stakeholders grant greatly increased recognition to the vital role played by the so-called 'extracurricular' activities in schools, especially high schools; that these activities be granted 'curricular' standing; and that Saskatchewan Education convene an Education Partner Committee to consider how these goals might be achieved, and,***

[$200,000]

16.2 ***That the educational system find ways to be more flexible in recognizing the contributions of teachers who perform duties well beyond normal expectations, as well as enhancing the ability of the school to draw upon parents and other members of the community in order to increase the school's capacity to offer such programs; and that the Foundation Operating Grant (FOG) recognize costs for such expenditures provincially up to $1 M in 2001-2002, and up to $3 M for each of the following three years; and,***

[$1 M in 2001-2002, and $3 M for each of the following three years]

16.3 ***That the SSTA, STF, LEADS and Saskatchewan Education explore ways in which greater flexibility can be afforded at the school level to remunerate persons from the community, and accord them full supervisory responsibility for student activities under specified, limited conditions; and,***

16.4 ***That the educational community in the province consider how service-oriented, and interest-based extracurricular activities might be further promoted, and how competitive academic and athletic ('heroes') accomplishments, especially in high***

schools, can be counterbalanced by recognition and celebration that is more broadly based.

[redacted]

17.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community promote a greater diversity of high schools and high school programs in the province; and,***

17.2 ***That the design of the variety of high schools be driven by the learning needs of their targeted student population, and that multiple exit outcomes be recognized, reflecting the fact that students do not share common post-high-school aspirations; and,***

17.3 ***That the province give serious consideration to adopting a multi-program approach to Grade 12 matriculation which recognizes the fact that students will choose many different career and education paths after high school; and that,***

17.4 ***That a 'college campus' approach be taken to Grades 11 and 12, with attendance monitored only in relation to classes (not 'spares'); and,***

17.5 ***That through increased cooperation between Saskatchewan Education, Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, and Social Services, "Retrieval" programs of various kinds be encouraged, developed and funded as part of the Community High School initiative identified in l.7.***

[see 1.7 for identification of $3.5 M for high schools in 2001-2002, and $4.5 M per year for the next 3 years]

17.6 ***That the contribution of the Historic High Schools in the province be recognized and affirmed; and, that steps be taken to correct any inequities between them in relation to the provision of provincial funding, preferably on the basis of Associate School status with school divisions.***

[$1 M in 2001-2002; and the same for each of the next 3 years]

[redacted]

18.1 ***That an Equity Fund be created which recognizes within the Foundation Operating Grant a cost to school divisions equivalent to $50 per pupil for 20% of their nominal student enrolment; and, that school divisions be enjoined to use this fund***

to ameliorate the burden of school fees for students whose families are experiencing financial hardship; and,

[$50 x 20% x 180,000 pupils = 1.8 M for 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years]

18.2 ***That some increase in the Equity Fund for schools in the Northern Administrative District be made by means of an adjustment in the calculation of the Northern Factor, to accommodate the fact that poverty rates in the north are higher than elsewhere in the province; and,***

18.3 ***That every effort be made by Boards of Education to monitor and, where possible, limit or even eliminate the assessment of school fees.***

[redacted]

19.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community continue to give cross-cultural education and anti-racist programs a high priority, both for schools and students, and also amongst educators in general; and,***

19.2 ***That Saskatchewan Education continue to strongly support its Aboriginal Education Unit, as well as promoting school division program and curriculum initiatives in cross-cultural and anti-racism education; and,***

[$750,000 in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years for Aboriginal Ed Unit and School Division initiatives]

19.3 ***That Saskatchewan Education create a 'clearing house' for cross-cultural and Aboriginal education resources, including Indian Languages, Native Studies, cross-cultural and anti-racist education materials that are developed by school divisions in the province; and,***

[$150,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

19.4 ***That the province continue to strongly support programs which offer opportunities for First Nation and Métis students to become teachers, such as NORTEP and SUNTEP and, particularly, to encourage the preparation of more teachers at the secondary level; and,***

[$500,000 in 2001-2002 and the same for each of the next 3 years, by the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, for program support (of the TEPs) and scholarships]

19.5 ***That the two universities in the province, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, ensure that their colleges of education have sufficient resources to permit the creation of specialist Aboriginal Education units, as well as opportunities to hire faculty of Indian and Métis ancestry; and,***

19.6 ***That school divisions endeavor to create joint-venture schools, with Tribal Councils and Indian Bands, which strongly reflect and support Aboriginal children, their languages and culture; and,***

19.7 ***That the province continue to recognize the unique needs of northern education, and the role of the school in supporting not only the education of children but also the ongoing economic and social development of northern communities.***

[redacted]

20.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community reaffirm the role of the school in the character formation of children and youth; and,***

20.2 ***That Saskatchewan Education re-examine and update the CEL, Personal and Social Values and Skills, and especially that it be articulated so as to promote a strong role for the school in the character formation of children and youth; and further, that the notions of responsibility for neighbour, citizenship, caring for others, and community service, be promoted as inspiring ideals; and***

20.3 ***That the revision of Personal and Social Values and Skills CEL take full cognizance of the context of children and youth today, especially the media environment (including video games); and that teaching and learning strategies be promoted which encourage critical thinking about this environment, especially as regards violence, gender and racial stereotyping, racism and discrimination of all kinds; and,***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and $100,000 for each year thereafter]

20.4 ***That a discourse be developed which recognizes the importance of worldviews, acknowledges differences of tradition and belief, but which strongly nurtures the values of respect and tolerance; and,***

20.5 ***That a major school and curriculum initiative, focusing on character formation and education, be launched by Saskatchewan Education and the other Education partner organizations.***

[$500,000 for each year, 2002-2005]

[redacted]

21.1 ***That the Saskatchewan education community consider ways in which School^{PLUS} programs might become an integral part of the overall community development strategy for rural and northern communities; and,***

21.2 ***That, in particular, avenues be explored that might permit the development of school-community cooperatives and joint ventures that will provide entrepreneurial labs and co-op work experiences for students and services for communities; and,***

[$150,000 in 2001-2002, and 100,000 in each of the following three years, to support recommendations 21.1 and 21.2]

21.3 ***That the Saskatchewan educational partners explore what, if any, legal and contractual issues relating to the development of school-community cooperatives exist, and how they might best be handled; and,***

21.4 ***That the Saskatchewan educational partners and other agencies (governmental and non-governmental) explore possible funding arrangements for school-community cooperatives; and,***

21.5 ***That the province be canvassed for the location of 5-7 suitable sites, especially in rural and northern areas, for the establishment of pilot projects.***

[$100,000 in 2001-2002, and $175,000 (7x $25,000) in each of the following three years]

[redacted]

[redacted]

22.1 ***That Saskatchewan Education, the other Human Service Departments, and the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation strike a committee to examine the implications of an integrated approach to school and human services that addresses: a) new construction projects; and b) the management of all office and school facilities that relate to a School^{PLUS} model; and,***

22.2 ***That the merits of an expanded campus model be considered for some new high schools, in select cases, that incorporates a considerably expanded service environment and possibly even some commercial space; and that the implications for construction, as well as legal ramifications (The Education Act imposes fairly strict limits on school divisions' freedom to lease space), be explored by the***

Saskatchewan education community, the human service departments and the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the three following years, to facilitate recommendations 22.1 and 22.2]

23. Funding

23.1 ***That the Government allocate funds in accordance with the implementation budget found in APPENDIX 1, Budget Estimates.***

D. Implementation

24. Implementation

24.1 ***That the Government create a broad-based action-oriented monitoring process, including a core committee, to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report; and further,***

24.2 ***That this committee, and process, be known as the School^{PLUS} Children and Youth Monitoring and Action Plan (SCYMAP).***

[$200,000 in 2001-2002, and in each of the following three years]

24.3 ***That SCYMAP be given the mandate and resources to develop special-topic materials, and create a broad-based Symposium, as a follow-up to this report.***

REFERENCES

$30 debt seen as motive in killing. (2000, November 21). *National Post*, p. 1.

Atkinson, P., Hon. (1997, August). *Involving parents and community in schools* [a Public Discussion Paper]. Regina, SK: Department of Education.

Bacon, J. E. (2000). *Development of the Learning Communities Leadership Analysis Instrument*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Billions of dollars spent on school computers and Internet connections would be better spent on more teachers. (2000, December 1). *National Post*, p. Front.

Bready, J. W. (1930). *Dr. Barnardo*. London: Allan & Unwin.

Bready, J. W. (1939). *England before and after Wesley*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Campbell students help needy families. (2000, December 16). *Leader-Post*, p. A7.

Canadian Institute of Child Health. (2000). *The health of Canada's children: A CICH profile* (3rd ed.). Ottawa, ON: Author.

Cherland, M. (2001). *Mission impossible? Raising kids who care*. Paper presented at the Equity and Values in Our Schools Seminar sponsored by the provincial Equity in Education Forum, Regina, SK.

Children and teenagers are saturated in violent images from video games, television and the Internet. (2000, November 21). *National Post*, p. 2.

Dryfoos, J. (1994). *Full service schools – A revolution in health and social services for children, youth, and families*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gabarino, J. (1999). *Raising children in a socially toxic environment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hunter, J. Davison. (1991). *Culture wars: The struggle to define America.* New York: Basic Books, HarperCollins,

Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee. (1991, December). *Partners in action*. Regina, SK: Department of Education, Government of Saskatchewan.

Innis, H. (1970). *The fur trade in Canada.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

It boggles the mind the jobs that teachers get assigned on the way to technologizing the classroom. (2000, December 1). *National Post*, p. 1.

Kuhn, T. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility.* New York: Bantam.

Livingston, D. (1999). *The education-jobs gap: Underemployment or economic democracy.* Toronto, ON: Garamond Press.

McCain, M., & Mustard, J. F. (1999, April). *Reversing the real brain drain: Early years study, final report.* Toronto, ON: Publications Ontario.

Minister's Advisory Committee Curriculum and Instruction Review. (1984, February). *Directions, the final report.* Regina, SK: Author.

Minister's Advisory Committee Curriculum and Instruction Review. (1985, December). *Towards 2000.* Regina, SK: Author.

Regina's hidden youth: Final report. (1999, July). Regina, SK: University of Regina, Saskatchewan Instructional Development & Research Unit.

Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education, in the province of Quebec. (1963). Quebec City, PQ: Government of the Province of Quebec, Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education.

Saskatchewan Association of School Councils. (1997, November). *Involving parents and community in schools.* Saskatoon, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Association of School Councils. (2000, November). *Comments and recommendations to the Role of the School Task Force Interim Report to the Minister of Education Government of Saskatchewan.* Saskatoon, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Council on Children. (1998, October). *Second report.* SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Education. (1984). *Directions. The final report.* Regina, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Education. (1998, May 15). *Saskatchewan Education briefing note.* Regina, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Education. (2000, August). *Saskatchewan Education enrolment projections 1999-2000 to 2010-11.* Regina, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment. (1991). *Instructional approaches.* Regina, SK: Author.

Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment. (1991). *Partners in action.* Regina, SK: Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee.

Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment. (1994). *Working together to address barriers to learning – Integrated school-linked services for children and youth at risk.* Regina, SK: Author.

Saul, J. R. (1997). *Reflections of a Siamese twin: Canada at the end of the twentieth century.* New York: Penguin.

Simon Fraser's University Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology. (2000, December1). Computers disrupt classroom: Study. *National Post*, pp. Front, A9.

Smith, J. K., & Smith, L. G. (1994). *Education today, the foundations f a profession.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

SSTA Research Centre. (1994). *Extending the learning community, involving parents and families in schools.* Regina, SK: Author.

St. Denis, V., & Schick, C. (2000, February). *Why is anti-racist education so difficult?* Paper presented at the WestCAST 2000 Conference, University of Regina, Regina, SK.

Stewart, D. (1999, December). *The place of schooling: A journey in humanization.* Paper presented at the provincial Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School, Regina, SK.

The Student Commission. (2000, April 29). *Synergy and energy*. Toronto, ON.

Tymchak, M. (2000). *Task Force and public dialogue on the role of the school: Interim report to the Minister of Education, Government of Saskatchewan.* Regina, SK: University of Regina, Saskatchewan Instructional Development & Research Unit (SIDRU).

Woodward, L. (1962). *The age of reform, 1815-1870.* Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Budget Estimates

Note. **Numbers beside the project items (left side) indicate the recommendation number in the report, e.g., "1.1 promotion of philosophy" is the budget item for recommendation 1.1 in the Community Schools section of the report. Not all recommendations have budget implications, so not all recommendation numbers are included in the budget estimates identified below. In what follows, budgets are estimated for a 1st year (2001-2002), and then the 3 following years (2002-2005) *on a per annum (pa) basis*, in order to accommodate the need for project planning and start-up phases.**

Projects		1st Year (2001–2002)	Next 3 Years (pa) (2002–2005)
Community Schools			
1.1	Promotion of philosophy & development (including high school projects)	400,000	300,000
1.5	Expansion of current program (especially of perimeter schools)	2.4 M (12 x 200,000)	2.4 M (12 x 200,000)
1.7	High schools	3.5 M (14 x 250,000)	4.5 M (18 x 250,000)
Interagency			
2.3	Interagency Fund (SEAHSN & projects)		
	Education	4 M	8 M
	Community-based Organizations (CBOs)	50,000	100,000
	Social Services	500,000	3 M
	(CBOs)	50,000	100,000
	Health	2 M	8 M
	(CBOs)	100,000	200,000
	Justice	500,000	4 M
	(CBOs)	50,000	100,000

Projects		1st Year (2001–2002)	Next 3 Years (pa) (2002–2005)
Boundaries			
2.5.1	Regional Coterminous (multi-agency)	–	500,000
2.5.2	Educ Regional offices +	500,000	500,000
Role of the Teacher			
4.3	Teacher-directed materials account	3.6 M (300 x 12,000)	3.6 M
Role of In-School Administrators			
5.2	School[PLUS] Admin-Coord	5 M	8 M
5.3	Policies, School[PLUS], Admin	200,000	200,000
Partnership with Students			
See	In-School Admin (5.2-5.3)		
Partnership with Parents			
See	Comm Schools (1.1-1.7)		
	Interagency – CBOs (2.3)		
	School[PLUS] (3.1-3.7)		
	In-School Admin (5.2-5.3)		
Pre-Kindergarten**			
9.1	Policy/strategy	300,000	300,000
9.2	Pre-kindergarten	2 M	2 M

+ Contributions from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and possibly individual Indian Bands, would be appropriate and should be solicited in support of this project.

** It is assumed that the operational support for enhanced intervention programs for children aged 0 to 3 in the province will come from the recently announced federal Early Childhood Fund. It is also assumed that the expenditure of this money will be effected on an interagency basis, recognizing that the Departments of Health and Social Services will especially have important roles to play. No estimates for these expenditures are included in this report.

Projects		1st Year (2001 – 2002)	Next 3 Years (pa) (2002 – 2005)
Hidden Youth			
10.1	Interventions [Educ]	1 M	2 M
	[Soc Serv]	225,000	1 M
10.2	Absenteeism protocol	300,000	
10.3	Tracking system	50,000	100,000
Information Technology			
13.1	I-T Grant	10 M	12 M
13.3	I-T Support (Sask Educ)	500,000	500,000
Career Education			
15.1-15.5	Career Ed initiatives	300,000	500,000
Extracurricular Activities			
16.1	Exploration	200,000	
16.2	FOG recognition	1 M	3 M
High Schools			
17.6	Historic High Schools & see Com Schools (1.7)	1 M	1 M
School Fees			
18.1	Equity Fund [$50 x 20% x 180,000]	1.8 M	1.8 M
Aboriginal Education			
19.2	Aborig Ed Unit & SD initiatives	750,000	750,000
19.3	Clearing house	150,000	150,000
19.4	Teacher Ed, esp. High School [PSEST]	500,000	500,000

Projects		1st Year (2001 – 2002)	Next 3 Years (pa) (2002 – 2005)
Student Attitudes and Behavior			
20.1-20.3	Character education	200,000	100,000
20.5	Program implementation		500,000
School-Community Cooperatives			
21.1-21.2	Program development	150,000	100,000
21.5	Pilot projects (5-7)	100,000	175,000 (7 x 25,000)
Physical Plant			
22.1-22.2	School[PLUS]		
	R & D	200,000	200,000
	Capital ?	?	?
Implementation			
24.1-24.3	SCYMAP (esp SEAHSN implementation)	200,000	200,000

TOTALS:

2001-2002

Education	**$39,850,000**
Social Services	775,000
Health	2,100,000
Justice	550,000
PSEST	500,000
	$43,775,000

2002-2005 pa

Education	**$52,975,000**
Social Services	4,100,000
Health	8,200,000
Justice	4,100,000
PSEST	500,000
Multi-agency (see 2.5.1)	500,000
	$70,375,000

APPENDIX 2

School^{PLUS} and the Teacher

1. The Task Force Report affirms the role of the teacher as the primary front-line professional responsible for the delivery of public education to children and youth. The School^{PLUS} environment is intended to provide resources and support to teachers rather than adding tasks that should be done by others. This environment values teachers' primary function of meeting students' educational needs within their social and cultural contexts through the Core Curriculum. To support teachers in this role, the School^{PLUS} environment:
   - provides help from a variety of different human service agencies for students with medical, social and behavioral challenges
   - delivers these services in the school setting if possible.

2. The goals of public education and Evergreen Core Curriculum produced from the public consultation process of 1984 (Directions Report) have reshaped and expanded the teacher's role to address a broader range of child and youth needs. Increased attention to students' social and personal development as well as the traditional academic development function is required. Although the School^{PLUS} environment provides services to children and youth to meet more of their non-educational needs, the Task Force Report recognizes that teachers' professional development needs have expanded accordingly, and they continually require:
   - *professional development* related to the personal and social development needs of children/youth to complement the teacher's academic and pedagogical expertise
   - *in-service* with teaching approaches that equip students to direct their own learning, to learn in cooperation with others and to learn from a variety of resources available
   - *support* to actualize the Core Curriculum, particularly the Adaptive Dimension.

3. Schools in the School^{PLUS} environment will continue to diversify programs to meet a broader range of student needs. High schools particularly will increasingly become sites for a range of programs to meet a variety of needs rather than being identified by a standard program with a number of "alternatives." Teachers will increasingly need to:
   - be team members with others in the development of policies and programs to meet students' needs
   - work with students in a variety of programs in different settings such as community settings and instructional technology environments
   - become accustomed to a more flexible structure in terms of school day, week and year, particularly at the high school level
   - work inclusively with a wider range of student life styles and interests
   - involve students in identifying their educational goals, learning experiences and assessment processes in order to facilitate a broader range of individualized programs (especially at the high school level)
   - function as facilitators of learning by helping students access resources to accomplish learning tasks appropriate to their development

- use the technology available to enhance student learning
- work with older students in a decreasingly custodial environment
- assess school experiences to give credit for partial completion of courses
- adapt to more frequent career changes within teaching necessitated by ongoing societal change and resulting program changes.

4. School^{PLUS} suggests an educational environment that includes a stronger component of human service providers, community members and parents. In the future, teachers will need to:
   - play an advocacy role for children and youth to promote their interests
   - exercise more sophisticated human relations skills with a wider variety of adults involved in school programs
   - recognize a broad range of child/youth needs
   - know the resources available for a wide range of child/youth needs, and refer students to appropriate resources
   - use community resources for student learning both in and outside of the school site
   - participate as a team member along with parents, community, and other human service providers in the School^{PLUS} environment
   - participate in community development by contributing expertise related to team building, goal setting, action planning and evaluation to the local community.

5. Teaching is much more complex than even a decade ago. In a time of increasing knowledge and unending change, teachers need to be life-long learners and members of their own learning communities. A considerable part of a teacher's day is not in the classroom working directly with students. In the School^{PLUS} environment teachers require the following support to deal with a greater range of student needs:
   - *reduced class sizes* that allow teachers to attend to personal and social development needs (in addition to academic needs) of students with a broader range of learning needs
   - *consultation time* as part of the work day to collaborate and consult with peers, parents, students and other agencies
   - *help of nonprofessionals* with nonteaching custodial functions.

6. As we enter the new millennium, the effects of globalization on our society and our children/youth are profound. In a time of high mobility, unlimited access to information, electronic relationships and global strife, together causing stress and uncertainty and yet unlimited possibilities for students, teachers are strategically positioned to profoundly influence their students. Teachers will need to:
   - be provided with opportunities to become the best individuals society has to offer the teaching profession
   - possess the highest qualifications possible for their role in the profession
   - have ready access to university programs at the pre-service and in-service levels that enhance their teaching by integrating theory and practice
   - be strongly oriented to the development of students as persons
   - provide students with the security, hope and inspiration, enabling them to live well with one another.

APPENDIX 3

School^{PLUS} and the In-School Administrator

1. Administration and leadership are two primary roles for in-school administrators. In the School^{PLUS} environment these two roles remain central, but are more focused on achieving and maintaining the School^{PLUS} environment in schools. This new focus demands a strong team-oriented approach to ensure program ownership. To accomplish this, in-school administrators will need to be builders of a school culture that is characterized by shared power through collaborative decision-making. In-school administrators will need to:
   - develop collaborative structures such as teacher committees that involve staff in-school decisions
   - develop collaborative structures that involve parents and community in school decisions
   - build teacher capacity to work and participate in the new environment by sharing leadership and power with teachers
   - build leadership capacity in the community by sharing leadership and power with parents and the community.

2. Children and youth are at the center of the School^{PLUS} environment. Key functions for in-school administrators will include:
   - working with teachers and the community to develop diverse educational programs to meet a wide variety of student needs
   - implementing initiatives for regular consultation with students about effectiveness of course and program delivery in schools
   - developing the leadership capacity of students.

3. Because the School^{PLUS} environment brings school into closer contact with a variety of other human service agencies, in-school administrators will need to engage in ongoing collaboration with other service providers in and out of the school setting. For the school to function in the new environment, in-school administrators will increasingly
   - function as team members with parents, community and human service agencies in policy development and delivery of human services to children and youth within their schools
   - provide in-service to their staff on the delivery of services
   - communicate with parents and the community about interagency initiatives
   - find ways to use the school building after school hours as a center for activities that serve needs of the community.

4. The move to the School^{PLUS} environment will involve considerable change on the part of teachers and other staff. As educational leaders, in-school administrators will need to:
   - affirm the ongoing nature of school change
   - facilitate the capacity of staff to change by arranging appropriate professional development
   - regularly solicit feedback of school programs and activities from parents, the community, students and teachers, and use these data collaboratively to plan for change.

5. Human relations capabilities will become more and more important for effective leadership and administration by in-school administrators in the School^{PLUS} environment. There will be a stronger need for:
   - professional development related to human relations such as communication, conflict resolution, problem-solving, mediation, team building, etc.
   - professional development related to community development knowledge and skills
   - a willingness and ease in working with the Aboriginal community
   - a willingness and ease in working with parents and the community.

6. The preparation, professional development and support of in-school administrators will need to be a much higher priority. This development will require the support of the partnership organizations. Some of the ways this can be done include:
   - building a provincial network or cadre of professional developers and community developers to assist schools and in-school administrators in building capacity for change
   - providing peer support programs for in-school administrators
   - establishing a provincial internship program for in-school administrators
   - providing in-service to develop the required skill sets related to this role
   - providing access to more flexible and responsive university graduate programs.

7. Additional administrative time for coordination, planning and leadership will be required in the School^{PLUS} environment. In-school administrators currently work to capacity. Therefore, there will have to be ways to increase administrative capacity without simply adding additional tasks to overworked in-school administrators. Some ways of doing this might include:
   - providing additional administration time to both principals and vice-principals so that in-school administrators can focus on leadership and administrative tasks that are most appropriate to in-school administrators in the School^{PLUS} environment
   - providing appropriate staff support to in-school administrators
   - allocating some administrative responsibilities to other human service agencies.

APPENDIX 4

What is a Community School?

The Idea of a Community School

- The Community School concept has its roots in community development ideas. These schools collaborate with community members to strengthen both the school and the community in which the school is located. Close ties to the community ensure that school programs reflect the cultural and socioeconomic life experiences of the children and youth who attend, and also are directed at meeting their unique needs.

- Community Schools are characterized by the provision of at least some of the following integrated school-linked services to children and youth, and their families: education, health, social services, justice and recreation. The school is the most convenient site for the delivery of these community-based services.

- Community Schools value community involvement to enable all students to succeed. Parents especially are encouraged to share responsibility for the education of their children. Community School Councils are made up of representatives from the school, including students, and the community. This structure guides the development of the relationship between school and community, and creates the opportunity for community/school collaboration and participation in important decision making.

- Community Schools focus on community development as well as school development. As well as programs for students, school facilities are used for community events, meetings and programs. Adult education activities and day cares are well suited to Community Schools and serve as examples of how community functions can be integrated into the school. An "open door" policy is evident in these schools.

- Teachers' roles are different in Community Schools. Teachers are compelled to interact much more closely with the community and various service providers. They are more integrally involved with the non-academic needs of children and youth. Teachers require in-service to prepare them to work collaboratively with non-educators.

- Administrators play an important leadership role in Community Schools ensuring that decision making is collaborative and that power is shared with teachers, the Council and other service providers.

- Many adults are present in Community Schools on a daily basis, playing a variety of roles from providing services to acting as volunteers. Students have access to a network of adults who support their learning and development. These include a coordinator, teacher associates, nutrition workers, counselors and elders-in-residence.

Saskatchewan Community Schools Program

- In 1980 the original Community Schools Program was established by Saskatchewan Education to address the needs of at-risk children and youth, the products of urban poverty. These schools offered a learning environment and programs that affirmed cultural traditions and provided support for the learning needs represented by the children in those schools. In 1996 the program was expanded to include nine more schools, and the policy framework, *Building Communities of Hope*, was released. The same year a pre-Kindergarten component was added to community schools in southern urban centers to give three- and four-year-old at-risk children half-time programming to develop school readiness skills. In 1996 the program was expanded to the north, and ten schools were designated in 1998. In 1999 five more southern schools were added, including the pre-Kindergarten component. The Community Schools Program budget has increased significantly in the past five years so that over 40 schools are now included.

- Currently, a designated Community School of 200 students receives a grant of $98,000. The grant provides resources for the operation of the school council, nutrition programs, and teacher associates. A discretionary amount of $8,000 can be used for various school purposes such as school trips.

Task Force Vision

Although established to meet needs more prevalent in core urban areas - followed in due course by the recognition of parallel needs in the north - *the underlying ideas of Community Schools can be applied to all schools including high schools, rural schools and northern schools.* There is a growing trend toward more parent and community involvement in the delivery of education. Schools are increasingly seeing the need to form links with the community to serve the diverse needs represented in classrooms. This environment lends itself to a broader application of the Community Schools vision for all schools in the province.

APPENDIX 5

List of Meetings

Phase 1

August 30-31, 1999
Saskatoon

- Panel: General Secretary, STF; President, LEADS; Executive Director, SSTA; Associate Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Education
- Individual Parents
- Editor of *Generation X* (youth magazine)
- Saskatchewan Children's Advocate
- Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Social Services
- Saskatchewan Council on Children

September 20-21, 1999
Regina

- Director, Education and Research, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
- Executive Director, Planning, Evaluation and Children's Services Branch, Saskatchewan Education

October 18-19, 1999
Yorkton

- Yorkton Public School Division No. 98;
  Yorkdale School Division No. 36;
  Yorkton Catholic School Division No. 86—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - In-School Administrators
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
- Yorkton Tribal Council
- Eastern Assiniboine Training & Employment Group
- Yorkton Friendship Centre
- Youth Outreach Group
- Child Action Plan Committee
- Department of Social Services, Yorkton Region
- East Central Health District
- Physical and Occupational Therapists, East Central Health District
- Indoor Air Quality Consultant
- RCMP Detachment Staff Sergeant
- Individual Citizen

- Clinical Psychologist
- Hon. Clay Serby, former Minister of Education

October 26-27, 1999
Nipawin
- Principals
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- School Board Members
- Health District & Social Services

Cumberland House
- Superintendent
- In-School Administrators
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Local School Board Members
- Inter-Agency Group

November 3-4, 1999
La Ronge
- Superintendent
- Principals
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Local School Board Members
- Inter-Agency Group

Pinehouse Lake
- Superintendent
- Principal
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Local School Board Members
- Inter-Agency Group

November 8-9, 1999
Meadow Lake
- Lakeview Elementary School Tour
- Director of Education
- Students
- Principals

- Teachers
- School Board plus Local Board Members
- Inter-Agency Group

Ile a la Crosse

- Students (Life Transitions, Information Processing combined class)
- Students (Adult Basic Education)
- Friendship Centre
- School Administrators
- Teachers
- Director of Education
- School Board Members
- Parents
- Inter-Agency Group (mayor, elders, Health District CEO)

November 23-24, 1999

Prince Albert

- Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division No. 119;
  Prince Albert Catholic School Division No. 6—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - In-School Administrators
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
- Margo Fournier Centre
- Social Services Regional Office
- Health District
- Won-ska Cultural School
- Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan
- Prince Albert Grand Council
- Community School Workers

November 24, 1999

Tisdale

- Tisdale School Division No. 53
  - Superannuated Teachers' Association
  - Tisdale Middle and Secondary School Students
  - Inter-Agency Group (Health District, Social Services Regional Office, Tisdale Ministerial Association, North East Early Childhood Intervention Program, R.C.M.P.)
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - School Division Focus Group

Debden

- Parkland School Division No. 64
  - Debden Golden Age Senior Citizens
  - Debden School Administrators
  - Students (SRC), Debden School
  - Parkland Teachers' Association
  - Shellbrook/Canwood Métis Association
  - Parkland Health Integrated Services Steering Committee
  - Parkland Boards of Education & Parents
  - Parkland Division Principals
  - Tribal Council Band School Administrators

Wakaw, Bruno, Cudworth, St. Louis

- Wakaw School Division No. 48

Wakaw

- Board of Education
- Panel: Director, Principal, Vice Principal
- Students
- Teachers

Bruno

- Principal
- Local Board of Education

Cudworth

- Students
- Teachers

St. Louis

- Principal
- Local Board of Education
- Teachers

December 15-16, 1999

Regina

- Expert Presentations by Faculty of Education, University of Regina:
  - Early Childhood Education—"Meeting & Supporting Diversity: Student Needs and Choices"
  - Educational Foundations—"The Place of Schooling: A Journey in Humanization"
  - Vocation/Technical Education—"Youth Unemployment & Skills Shortages"
- Historical High Schools Association
- Education Critic, Saskatchewan Party

January 25-26, 2000

Swift Current

- Swift Current School Division No. 94;
  Swift Current School Division No. 11;
  Prairie West School Division No. 75;
  Swift Current Comprehensive High School—

The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:

- Directors of Education
- Division Office Administrators
- In-School Administrators
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- School Board Members

- Maverick High School
- Inter-Agency Group
  - Social Services
  - Health
  - Regional Intersectoral Committee
  - Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse
  - School Division Student Services
- Southwest Youth Transitions Partnerships
- South West Centre for Entrepreneurial Development Inc.
- Youth Canada Project
- R.C.M.P., City and Rural Detachments

January 26, 2000
Maple Creek

- Maple Creek School Division No. 17
  - Director of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - Principals
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Inter-Agency Group
    - Health
    - Social Services
    - Chamber of Commerce
    - Police
    - Mayor

Eastend

- Eastend School Division No. 8
  - Director of Education
  - Principals
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Inter-Agency Group
- Chamber of Commerce

- Police
- Mayor
- Individuals

February 15-17, 2000
Saskatoon

- Saskatoon Public School Division No. 13;
  St. Paul's Catholic School Division No. 20;
  Saskatoon East School Division No. 41;
  Saskatoon West School Division No. 42—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
- Community Groups at Large:
  - Saskatoon Catholic Community Schools Group
  - Saskatoon Public Community Schools Group
  - Joe Duquette School
  - Farm School
  - Nutana Collegiate
  - Holy Cross Collegiate
  - Saskatoon Police Service
  - Regional Intersectoral Committee
  - Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
  - Saskatoon Communities for Children
  - Political Action Group on Poverty
  - Concerned Individuals

February 17, 2000
Lloydminster

- Lloydminster Public School Division No. 99;
  Lloydminister Catholic School Division No. 89—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Integrated School-Linked Services Committee

Maidstone

- Battle River School Division No. 60 (Lloydminster-based Division)
  - Director of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members

Watrous

- Saskatchewan Central School Division No. 121
  - Director of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Business Community Members

March 21-22, 2000

Regina

- Regina Public School Division No. 4;
  Regina Catholic School Division No. 81—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
- Ranch Ehrlo (Pilot Butte)
- Regional Intersectoral Committee
- Regina Police Service
- Chamber of Commerce
- Regina Treaty Status/Indian Services
- Regina Métis Sport and Culture Inc.
- Farm Stress Line
- Family Service Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board
- Community NetWORKS
- Saskatchewan Association for Community Living
- Saskatchewan Association for Multicultural Education
- Individuals

March 22, 2000

Moose Jaw

- Moose Jaw Public School Division No. 1
  Moose Jaw Catholic School Division No. 22
  Christ the King School Division No. 83
  Thunder Creek School Division No. 78—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
- John Chisholm Alternate School
- Vanier Collegiate
- Alternate Learning Program
- Inter-Agency Group

April 11, 2000

Arcola

- Souris Moose Mountain School Division No. 122
  - Director of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Inter-Agency and Shared Services Consultants

Estevan

- Estevan Public School Division No. 95;
  Estevan Catholic School Division No. 27;
  Estevan Comprehensive High School—
  The Task Force met with the following groups in each Division:
  - Directors of Education
  - Division Office Administrators
  - In-School Administrators
  - Students
  - Teachers
  - Parents
  - School Board Members
  - Inter-Agency Consultants

St. Isadore de Bellevue

- Conseils Scolaire Fransaskois
  - Directors of Education

- Division Office Administrators
- In-School Administrators
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- School Board Members

May 17, 2000: May Regional Hearings
North Battleford
- Battlefords School Division No. 118
- North West School Division No. 16
- North West Regional College
- Saskatchewan Association of School Councils
- Early Years Project
- University of Saskatchewan, College of Education
- Outlook School Division No. 32

Melfort
- Melfort School Division No. 100
- Humboldt School Division No. 47
- Crystal Lakes School Division No. 120
- Kamsack School Division No. 35
- Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
- NORTEP (Northern Teacher Education Program)

Weyburn
- Potashville School Division No. 80
- Moosomin School Division No. 9
- Estevan School Division No. 62
- Prairie View School Division No. 74
- Indian Head School Division No. 19
- University of Regina, Faculty of Education

May 18, 2000
Saskatoon
- Tour of Nutana Collegiate Institute
- Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board
- Integrated Services Consultant, Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina
- School Resource Officer, Saskatoon Police Service
- Saskatoon Communities for Children (Legal Aid Lawyer)

June 14, 2000
Saskatoon
- Deputy Ministers and Assistant Deputy Ministers:
  - Education
  - Social Services
  - Health

- Justice
- Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs
- Postsecondary Education and Skills Training

Phase 2

- **September 2000**

- *September 21*	SSTA Executive
- *September 26*	Minister of Education, Hon. J. Melenchuk
- *September 29*	Human Services Integration Forum, Coordinator, Bill Werry

- **October 2000**

- *October 3*	Cochrane High School Staff
- *October 4*	Noon Edition Radio Show (CBC)
- *October 11*	SIDRU Seminar
- *October 12*	Regional Education Office Staff (Saskatchewan Education)
- *October 12*	SSTA-LEADS Joint Role-of-the-School Conference
- *October 14*	STF Councilors (Saskatoon)
- *October 16-18*	Role of the School Symposium (Saskatoon)
- *October 20*	Saskatchewan Community School Association (Prince Albert, Wesmore High School)
- *October 21*	University of Regina, Graduate Class in Administration
- *October 25*	Human Services Integration Forum (Provincial Conference, Melfort)

- **November 2000**

- *November 7*	STF – Ad Hoc Committee on Principalship (Saskatoon)
- *November 7*	College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, Professional Development Seminar
- *November 8*	Saskatoon Public Schools, Principals' Professional Organization
- *November 8*	Chamber of Commerce (Provincial Executive)
- *November 24*	Saskatchewan Party - Ministerial Critics (Legislative Building)
- *November 25*	Learning for Life Conference (Plenary Panel) College of Education, University of Saskatchewan
- *November 27*	SSTA Annual Convention

- **December 2000**

- *December 1*	Region No. 4, Directors, Superintendents and Consultants
- *December 2*	University of Saskatchewan – Mini-Conference on Curriculum
- *December 9*	STF – Executive Members of Special Subject Councils
- *December 9*	STF – Advisory Committee on Educational Issues

APPENDIX 6

List of Submissions

Submissions Received to June 30, 2000

Business

1. Ad Hoc Views of Yorkton Chamber of Commerce – Ms. Deb Schmidt

Community School Workers

2. A Collection of Letters from Students and Community Members – Wesmor Community High School
3. A Tool in the Development and Sustainability of Communities: Community School Principles – Mr. Jim Elliott
4. Community Development and Community Schools – Ms. Delphine Melchert
5. Looking to the Future of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth: Role of the School – Prince Albert Community Schools

Community Service Workers

6. Back to the Basics – April Dahnke
7. A Brief for Role of the School Task Force Provincial Cabinet – The Saskatchewan Association for Community Living
8. Building Healthy Communities Through Community Involvement – The Women's and Children's Health and the Population Health Teams of the East Central Health District
9. Changing Needs of Children, Youth and Community – Addictions Counsellor
10. Child and Youth Mental Health Services Within the Education System – Child and Youth Services, Swift Current
11. Children Not in School – Saskatoon Communities for Children, Inc.
12. Children with Diabetes and the Role of the School – Betty Deschamps
13. Early Identification of Behavioural or Academic Problems: Block Funding for Special Education Needs – Dr. Harriet Novak-Galgan
14. Education in the North – Mr. Alan Bischoff
15. Education-Involved Indicators of Child Prostitution – Cst. J. Schriemer
16. Experiences and Thoughts Towards Education and the Future of our Youth – Mr. Chris Ross
17. Family Service Agencies' Roles in Education – Family Service Saskatchewan
18. Indoor Air Quality – Mr. James Lechman
19. Larger Issues – Mr. Tom Seeley
20. Observations and Suggestions: Input from Regina School Division No. 4 – Student Support Services Staff
21. Presentation by the Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office to the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the "Role of Schools" – The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office
22. Presentation Notes for Role of School Task Force – Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
23. Presentation to the Role of the School Committee – Farm Stress Line
24. Promoting and Supporting Early Learning – The Regina Early Learning Centre

25. A Proposal for Enhanced Therapy Service in the School System – Ms. Lesley Stamatinos, Ms. Diane Giesbrecht, and Ms. Moira Metrunec
26. Proposal on School Fees and School Expenses for Submission to "Communities for Children" – Political Action Group on Poverty and the Economic Equity Pod
27. Recommendations on "Role of the School" – Yorkton Child Action Committee
28. Reestablishing the School as a Community Centre – Mr. Don Watson
29. Role of the School Discussion – Swift Current Regional Intersectoral Committee
30. The Role of School Social Workers – Ms. H. Blackwell, Ms. I. Brooks, Ms. C. Christie-Beach, Ms. W. Shaw, and Ms. M. Tremblay
31. Some Thoughts about the Role of the School – Ms. Eileen Bone
32. Submission to the Role of the School Committee – Child & Youth Mental Health Services, East Central District
33. Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School – Saskatchewan Association for Multicultural Education Submission
34. A Vision for Saskatchewan Schools – Saskatchewan Literacy Network
35. Written Submission to the "Role of the School" Task Force – Ms. Elaine Carlson
36. Youth Contributions to Their Communities – United Way of Regina
37. Youth Issues – Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board
38. Youth Unemployment and Skills Shortages in Saskatchewan – Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board
39. Early Childhood Services for Kindergarten-age Children in Four Canadian Provinces: Scope, Nature and Models for the Future - Tom Seeley, SIGN, Yorkton
40. Role of the School: Changing Needs of Children and Delivery of Educational Services - Saskatchewan Council on Children
41. Rights of the Intellectually Disabled - North East Regional Association for Community Living

Educational Administrators

42. Independent Schools – The Schools of the Saskatchewan Historical High Schools Association
43. Key Issues Affecting SIAST – Mr. Rod Macpherson
44. Role of the School: Dialogue – Mr. W. David Thompson
45. Role of the School: Regina Public Schools – Ms. Audrey Roadhouse
46. Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School – Watrous Rural School Principals
47. Role of the Schools in Shamrock S. D. and Saskatchewan - Shamrock S. D. No. 38 In-School Administrators, Board of Education, Central Office Staff
48. Role of the School: Key Questions - Wadena Local School Board
49. Role of the School Survey Results (March 2000) - Wadena S. D. No. 46

Parents and Trustees

50. Flip Chart Exercise – SSTA Annual General Meeting
51. Funding Interventions and Initiatives – The Urban Public Boards Directors of Education and the Education Committee Catholic Section of the SSTA
52. Meeting of the Role of the School Committee with the Regina Public School Board – Ms. Verda Petry

53. Parent Forum: Group Discussion Notes – Regina Public Schools
54. Presentation to the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the "Role of Schools" – Ms. Carol Larwood
55. Special Needs Students – Anonymous Parent
56. Task Force of Education Presentation – Katherine Duke
57. Expertise/Understanding of Different Learning Styles - Heather Chisholm
58. How to Reach Parents in our School System - Donna Garvin

Post Secondary Educators

59. Meeting and Supporting Diversity: Student Needs and Choices – Drs. C. Krentz and K. McNaughton
60. The Place of Schooling: A Journey in Humanization – Dr. D. Stewart
61. Youth Unemployment and Skills Shortages - Dr. K. Quinlan

School Divisions

62. Presentation to the Role of the School — Parkland School Division No. 63

Students

63. Answers to the Questions Posed by the Task Force – Students
64. Reply to the Task Force's Questions – Watrous High School SRC
65. Suggestions of Students – Saskatoon School Division No. 13
66. Yorkton Youth Outreach Report – Yorkton Youth Outreach Program

Teachers

67. Barriers to Meeting Needs – Anonymous
68. Cooperation Between Social Services and Educators – Mr. Len Brhelle
69. Recommendations – Mr. Len Lorenz
70. Results of a Focus Group – Northern Teachers
71. Results of a Focus Group – Parkland Teachers' Association
72. The Role of the School – NetWORKS
73. Submission from a teacher in the Prince Albert Catholic School Division – Anonymous
74. Archaic Administrative Realities - Anonymous
75. Lack of Support for Special Needs Children - Mr. Curt McCoshen

Unions

76. Basic Learning – Cal Erickson, United Food and Commercial Workers' Union
77. Submission – Education Workers' Steering Committee, CUPE, Saskatchewan Regional Office

Submissions Received after June 30, 2000

Aboriginal Groups

1. Initiatives in the Community of North Battleford - Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
2. Submission to the Task Force on the Role of the School - Saskatoon Tribal Council, Urban First Nations Services Inc.

Business

3. Action Saskatchewan: A Blueprint for 2005, Version1.0 - Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce

Community School Workers

4. The Role of Schools: A Review of Successful School-based Strategies to Engage Young People as Active and Meaningful Partners in Creating Powerful Learning Environments Within the Classroom and Beyond – Del Williams

Community Service Workers

5. Comments and Recommendations on the Interim Report – Lucy Eley
6. Documentation regarding family literacy - Saskatchewan Literacy Network
7. Elimination of School Fees - Saskatoon Communities for Children
8. Feed-back Comments on the "Role of the School" Interim Report - Moose Jaw Regional Intersectoral Committee
9. Goals of Education - Canadian Federation of University Women
10. Thoughts and Observations from the Saskatchewan Council on Children - Saskatchewan Council on Children
11. Need for Adult Education Principles/Cross-Cultural Training - Saskatchewan Literacy Network

Educational Administrators

12. Comments on the Role of the School – John Duerkop
13. E-mail regarding the report – Heather Vermeersch
14. Input of Grade 10 and 11 students from Gordon F. Kells High School - Don Shakotko
15. Integrated School Linked Services for the Francophone Community - Denis Ferré
16. Building Community Bridges - Scenic Valley SD No. 117
17. Reflections on the Interim Report - Toby Greschner
18. Response to the Role of the School Interim Report - Outlook School Division
19. Whitewood Action for Families Project Outline – Todd Butler
20. Reactions to Interim Report – Tom Hall
21. Reactions to Interim Report – Brian Keegan

Government

22. Child Welfare in Saskatchewan - Department of Social Services, Government of Saskatchewan
23. Comments of the Department of Postsecondary Education and Skills Training – Neil Yeates, Deputy Minister, Postsecondary Education and Skills Training, Government of Saskatchewan
24. Department of Justice's Response to the Interim Report on the Role of the School – John D. Whyte, Deputy Minister, Department of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan
25. Interim Report Response - John Nicholson
26. Southeast Saskatchewan Distance Education Pilot Project, 1998-2001 - James Benning, President and CEO, Saskatchewan Communications Network

Parents and Trustees

27. Comments and Recommendations to the Role of the School Task Force Interim Report to the Minister of Education, Government of Saskatchewan - Saskatchewan Association of School Councils
28. Interim Report Response - Rusty Chartier
29. The Problem of Labelled Children - Doreen Jurkovic
30. School and the Environment - Garth Herman
31. Submission to the Role of the Schools Task Force - Hugh & Lynn Strendin
32. Submission to the Task Force on the Role of the School - Deborah Oliver
33. Submissions to the Task Force - Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
34. Interim Report: Feedback and Comments - Anonymous

Postsecondary Educators

35. Benefits of Vocational Education - Kevin Quinlan
36. Globalisation - Viola Woodhouse
37. Issues Facing Postsecondary Educators – Blaine Jensen, SIAST

Students

38. Submissions of Kipling School Students

Teachers

39. Working with Social Services - Len Brhelle
40. Technology vs. Resources - Joel Kitchen

APPENDIX 7

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to engage the education community, human service sectors, government, families and communities in meaningful and informed dialogue on the role of schools. It will include literature and jurisdictional reviews as well as facilitation of public dialogue to identify issues and options and make recommendations, including how supports can be put in place to assist schools in achieving their role. Recommendations will be directed to the provincial government, education partners and other stakeholders that have a role to play in supporting the education, development and well-being of children and youth in schools.

Membership

The public dialogue will be conducted by a Committee consisting of five to nine persons, appointed by the Minister of Education. These people will be chosen from a broad cross-section of the education community (including parents), as well as the human service and other sectors.

Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to:

1. Facilitate informed dialogue within the education community and among other human service sectors, family members and the public;

2. Raise awareness and gain support among stakeholders and the public regarding the challenges and responsibilities schools embrace, including the extent to which the personal and social circumstances of children and youth impact on the quality of their education;

3. Identify the extent to which there is a gap between expectations of schools and their capacity to respond along with family, community and other agencies, in support of the healthy development and education of children;

4. Identify options and approaches for the role of schools in light of the needs of children and families, society's expectations and current resources;

5. Seek shared understanding of the role of schools, how this role can be supported, who should be involved, and report on areas of agreement and disagreement; and,

6. Provide direction and facilitate shared responsibility among a broad range of stakeholders for the implementation of the recommendations.

Delimitations

While the focus of this public dialogue is the changing role of schools in light of the changing personal and social circumstances of children, the dialogue may surface other issues. The Government of Saskatchewan, however, remains committed to the following three understandings that will not be within the parameters of this dialogue:

- the value and benefit of Core Curriculum;
- the responsibility for education shared between the provincial government and local autonomous boards of education; and,
- the constitutional protection afforded linguistic and minority faith populations.

Process and Timelines

The Committee will use a range of innovative and inclusive methods and structures to engage the education community, other human service sectors, parents and the public in dialogue as set out in the parameters. In addition, the Committee will engage senior government and other partners in dialogue to build shared understanding of and support for the role of schools. A parallel activity will include literature and jurisdictional reviews to identify options.

The overall initiative will involve two phases, beginning in March 1999 and ending December 31, 2000:

- The Committee will be established in March 1999 and will begin the public dialogue in September 1999, providing an interim report by June 2000.
- Based on the interim report, the Committee will continue with a second phase of the dialogue, the parameters of which will be determined based on the progress and findings of the first phase, with a final report by December 31, 2000.

Secretariat

The Committee will be supported by a secretariat, including a researcher/coordinator and clerical support.

APPENDIX 8

Glossary

Adaptive Dimension: the concept of making adjustments in approved educational programs to accommodate diversity in student learning needs (a principle of Saskatchewan's Core Curriculum)

alternate programs/schools: programs or schools which do not follow the structure and schedule of mainstream schools but rather adapt these to the individual student with unusual circumstances, while still providing a path to a high school diploma

associate status: a term applied to schools that are publicly funded and adhere to the provincial curriculum but adapt it to a particular, usually religious, orientation; e.g., Historic High Schools

at risk: a term that describes students who, for various reasons such as behavioral, economic, cultural, physical and mental, are in danger of being unable to complete a K-12 education

character education: a part of the school curriculum which encourages students to acquire personal and social values and skills (see the Saskatchewan Education Curriculum, Common Essential Learnings)

charter schools: similar to associate status schools, but with a focus on specific programs that attracts a narrower range of students – more common in the United States

college model: a description of school without a custodial function, in which students are not required to be on school premises outside of class hours (as in a college or university setting)

community-based organization (CBO): a non-government human service organization which is based in a region, not as the arm of a government or provincial agency, but as an organization unique to the community; e.g., Saskatoon Communities for Children; Family Services, etc.

community development: the process of building leadership capacity and increasing the involvement of community members in local affairs

Community School funding schedule: as divorced from the Community School concept or philosophy, a formula that provides funding for a Community School on the basis of the number of students at risk (recommended term: "at-risk student factor" – see Recommendation 1.4)

Community School philosophy: see APPENDIX 4

Community School Program: a Saskatchewan Education initiative designed for elementary schools in communities with a given number of "at-risk children" (see definition above). The program provides funding to these schools to facilitate the involvement of community services, as well as parents, in fulfilling all the needs of the students

Core Curriculum: the approved course of study for Saskatchewan's publicly-funded K-12 schools, which includes the following principles:

- Required Areas of Study (RAS) - language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health education, arts education and physical education
- Common Essential Learnings (CELs) – communication, critical and creative thinking, personal and social values and skills, independent learning, numeracy and technological literacy

- Locally Determined Options
- Adaptive Dimension
- Resource-based Learning
- Aboriginal Content and Perspectives
- Gender Equity
- Instruction and Evaluation
- Multicultural Education
- Special Education

Correspondence School: a section of Saskatchewan Education that provides print instruction, tutoring assistance, and assessment, by correspondence, leading to a high school diploma

coterminous: refers to a case where boundaries of different government departments and regions are the same geographically, e.g., a Health District would exist in the same geographical space as a School Division or a Social Services Region

Directions: the 1984 report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction Review, which was given the responsibility in 1981 of assessing curriculum and instruction in Saskatchewan and establishing directions for the future

distance education: the off-site delivery of course content through correspondence or electronic means

early childhood: usually refers to the early years of a child's life from infancy to age 8 but, for the purpose of this Report, refers to the stages of development from "minus 9 months" to infancy

early intervention: in the terms of this *Report*, early intervention refers to action taken in the early years of a child's life, from birth to school entry, which addresses barriers to learning created by disadvantageous conditions and circumstances

education partner organizations: organizations directly involved in making the K-12 education system function, namely Saskatchewan Education, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, teacher education institutions (University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Indian Teacher Education Program, Northern Teacher Education Program, Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Programs), and Saskatchewan Association of School Councils (provincial parents' organization)

education stakeholder organizations: organizations or individuals with a stake in encouraging the education system to function according to their orientations, such as the Saskatchewan Literacy Network, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board, Saskatchewan Multicultural Association, parents at large, various individuals, etc.

essential School^{PLUS} principle: a new, government-authorized organizational environment, *developed at the local or regional level*, characterized by school, community and human service partnerships, in which education and all other human services required by children and youth are, where feasible and appropriate, school-based, or, at least, school-linked

Foundation Operating Grant (FOG): the annual government grant through Saskatchewan Education to each publicly-funded school in the province, the amount of which varies from year to year depending upon enrolment totals

full campus/expanded campus model: a concept, especially intended for high schools, that would provide human service offices in mall-like surroundings, features of which might be daycare facilities, exercise rooms, swimming pools, medical and dental offices, police detachments, commercial ventures (bookstore, convenience store, coffee shop, clothing shop, hair salon, etc.), plus student-operated ventures

full-service school: a school which provides all services that might be required by any given student (as in a community school – see definition above). These might include health, child welfare, counseling, and occupational therapy services, and many others

hidden youth: children and youth who are under 18, have no fixed address, do not attend school, and live on the street in marginal situations related to inadequate shelter, food, clothing and health care

high-speed connectivity: capability of fast connection to internet providers regardless of location in the province

HSIF: Human Services Integration Forum, a government body of cooperating departments that share information on the needs of children and youth within their areas of responsibility and make remedial funding decisions – these departments include Education; Social Services; Health; Postsecondary Education and Skills Training; Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing; and, Justice

human service agencies: all government departments listed under HSIF above, as well as all nongovernment organizations involved in the delivery of human services

information technology: computers and their related technologies and services that provide students with global access to information via the Internet, as well as opportunities to learn through distance education modes of delivery

integrated services/case management: a term related to full-service schools, through which all needs of a particular student are met in a manner which involves the service providers' working together to achieve the common goal of assistance for the whole child

interagency: a term describing cooperation and collaboration between and among agencies in meeting the needs of children and youth in more than one service area

New School; School^{PLUS}: terms suggested in this *Report* to describe the full-service school of the future

North (the); Northern: capitalization of these words denotes the North as an area of Saskatchewan, and Canada also, that are or have been served by provincial and federal government departments called "Northern Affairs." In Saskatchewan this area was previously called the Northern Administrative District (NAD), and consisted of the region north of the 'Green Lake – Cumberland House' line. 75% of the population of this district are of Aboriginal ancestry

Personal and Social Values and Skills: one of the Saskatchewan K-12 Curriculum's six "Common Essential Learnings" (CELs), which are interrelated areas of understandings, values, skills and processes designed for integration into curriculum and instruction in all subject areas

physical plant: refers to school buildings and all the accompanying physical aspects of the structures where education takes place, e.g., classrooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, computer rooms, playgrounds and playground equipment, etc.

pre-Kindergarten: refers to the period between 3 and 5 years, immediately following "early childhood" and immediately preceding Kindergarten age (age 5), during which programs are required for continuity of development and preparation for entry into the K-12 school system

preservice teacher: a student registered in a provincial postsecondary teacher education institution where he/she is studying to become a teacher (also called "student teacher")

public education: refers to K-12 education, whether a school is Public or Catholic, that is funded by the provincial government (sometimes known as "publicly-funded education") and incorporates the provincial curriculum of study

pupil-teacher ratio: the number of students per teacher in a classroom

retrieval: refers to programs offered in the high school that would allow students over age 21, who wish to come back into that setting for completion of Grade 12, to do so rather than enroll in an adult upgrading program; also refers to programs to accommodate students who do not wish to return to a school-based setting

RIC: Regional Intersectoral Committees are the "on-the-ground" working groups of the Human Services Integration Forum (see definition above), with membership comprising all local agencies having responsibility for one aspect or other of the well being of children and youth in school

role-alike groups: groups comprising people of like purpose and activity, e.g., school division administrators (directors, superintendents, consultants), in-school administrators (principals, vice-principals), school board members (also called "trustees"), teachers, students, parents, community services workers, and business, industry and labour workers

school-based: refers to any service that is housed on the school premises, such as a nurse's office, an addiction counselor's office, etc.

school-linked: refers to a service that is *not* housed on the school premises, but is in close proximity and immediately available to the school upon request

School^{PLUS} environment: an environment in which the services of public education, and those of other human service agencies, governmental and non-governmental, are delivered in a coordinated manner, either within the school or in easily accessible proximity, for the education and well-being of children and youth

SCN: Saskatchewan Communications Network, the province's educational television network, capable of delivering televised distance education courses to schools throughout the province

SCYMAP: School^{PLUS} Children and Youth Monitoring and Action Plan, involving a broad-based committee (membership to include HSIF, RICs, Regional Education offices, as well as non-government agencies) and a process to oversee implementation of recommendations in this *Report*.

SEAHSN: the SSTA, STF, LEADS, Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network, a consortium of education partners, including the SSTA, STF, LEADS, Saskatchewan Education and HSIF, authorized to create a truly integrated human services environment for children and youth

Shared Services: a Saskatchewan Education initiative through which several schools within a given geographical area share resources and services necessary to education in order to cut costs

single-jurisdiction model: for the purpose of this *Report*, a model where a school division would be served by one regional office of a service agency, even when the agency's services for that geographical area fall within the jurisdiction of several regional offices (Health, social Services, etc.)

stove pipe delivery: the delivery of human services exclusively through single government departments without coordination with related services of other departments

student-centred: the approach in the Saskatchewan Education curriculum which makes the development and education of the whole child the primary focus of the education system

student diversity: concerns the variations and differences, among students in any given classroom, school, division or system, in cultural heritages and identities, gender and class experiences, and mental and physical abilities

The Young Offenders Act: part of the Criminal Code of Canada which treats juvenile offenders in a different manner than adult offenders by prohibiting publication of names, concentrating on rehabilitation strategies and reducing incarceration

tracking: a system to identify and monitor progress of students among schools, divisions and systems (e.g., provincial and Band-controlled)

trustee: a municipally-elected member of a school division board

vouchers: especially in the United States, where a "voucher" is a promise of public funding by government of a specified amount for a child; this funding follows the child as a revenue for whatever school is chosen by the family